Enter into thy Closet,

OR A

METHOD

AND

ORDER

FOR PRIVATE

DEVOTION.

A Treatise endeavouring a plain discovery of the most Spiritual and Edifying course of Reading, Meditation, and Prayer; and so of Self Examination, Humiliation, Mortification, and such most necessary Christian duties, by which we sue out the pardon of our sins from Heaven, and maintain an holy Converse with God.

Together with particular perswasives thereunto, and helps therein.

Zech. 3. 2. *Is not this a Brand pluck'd out of the Fire?*

London, Printed for *John Martyn*, and are to be sold at *Will. Faithornes* without *Temple-Bar*. 1666.

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AN ADMONITION TO THE READER.

Hat it is the fashion to call an *Epistle to the Reader*, or, if it be somewhat longer, a *Preface*, the Author stiled an *Admonition*, or *Advertisement to the Reader*, that by a more unusual title he might the more surely draw him to read it, before he doth the Book.

And the first thing, which he admonisheth thee of, Good Reader, is, that thou neither question nor scruple what judgment he is of, before thou hast considered what he here saith: nor that when thou shalt have read a little way into the Book, thou make such conjectures of its Authors opinion, as to conclude the book fit onely to be laid aside by thee, because he, who writ it, may haply discent from thee in some

some matters. He very little meddles with any matters here, in which it is likely that any sober Christian dissents from him. A dissatisfying expression, or a chapter, should not be warrant enough to thee for thy sentencing him this or that, and rejecting what else he says for thine and common good. Perhaps he may make mention of a *Common-prayer-book*, or *Holy days*, only to draw in them, who will hear of no devotion

which rejects these, but execrate it still as *Fanatical*, to the reading his Book, and thereby to a more serious and Christian use of those things, than what all are guilty of. Perhaps, on the other side, he may be in good earnest, and thinking them right Christian and useful, commend them to thy practice, and direct thee so to use them, as that thou shalt by such use of them begin less to quarrel with them. Either design is honest,

honeſt, and it is no matter whether it is, which he hath, nor who, or what he is. He would onely have thee to take him for a man of ſerious and ſober principles, and one who would have all that profeſs Chriſtianity to be ſuch alſo: (and ſuch thou muſt either take him to be, or elſe, being that thou knoweſt him not, and ſo canſt not know him to be otherwiſe, thou art uncharitable:) And as being ſuch, that, which he

endeavours here, is to bring thee ſeriouſly upon thy knees before God, there to examine thine heart and actions according to that Chriſtian rule, which indiſpenſibly enjoynes thee Charity, Meekneſs, Moderation, Peaceableneſs, and ſuch ſweet Virtues; which if thou do but uſe thy ſelf to, thou wilt judge thy ſelf no otherwiſe a Chriſtian than as theſe Chriſtian Graces are in thee, and receive, as a new-born babe,

the

the ſincere milk of the doctrine of godlineſs, come it to thee in what veſſels ſoever.

Another thing, which he hath to adviſe thee of, is matter of direction in the uſe of this Book: in which caſe his deſire to thee is, that thou wilt firſt read over the Table, which is at the beginning of it, and mark the ſubſtance of what he there promiſeth to treat of; that then, if thou reſolve to make uſe of this

method for thy devotion (and, the Author thinks thou wilt, if thou have the patience to consider it, and canst obtain leisure of thy self to practice it) that thou wilt read the Book once or twice over, and endeavour, by attent consideration, to understand it; and when thou hast once got the Book thus into thine head, the practice will soon grow easie (he is sure, at least, most sweet and bleſſedly delightful.) Be but per-

swaded

ſwaded to try it one month or two, and ſee if thou canſt find in thy heart to be ſo injurious to thine own felicity, as to lay it aſide again.

Somewhat too there ſhould be ſaid as to what is likely to be objected againſt the contents hereof. It may haply be conceived, there are here ſome practices directed to in ordinary Devotions, which are too high for every mans reach (as is meditating upon

Scripture,

Scripture, in such sort as is here taught, endeavouring the mortification of sin in such rational methods, &c.) some circumstances too, as to the place of retirement, unnecessary, or above most mens condition, &c. As to the former of which, the Authors answer is, that patterns of this nature must not be set too low, for that men are apt rather to aim under than over; that he thinks there is very little of practice here,

here, by which a plain capacity may not understand somewhat, which he will conclude to be his duty, though it may be he reach not all in that case; and further both as to this and to the latter point supposed to be objected, that the higher matters and more curious circumstances are commended onely to men of abilities, estates and leisure suitable: Let all go as high as they can, and their devotions will be sure to

be

be more compleat, than if they had aimed lower.

Now, which is all that ſhall be added, poſſibly ſome may think ſuch Books as theſe needleſs at preſent, after ſo many extant in this kind already. Hereunto the Authors Apology might be, that the number of ſuch books is much at preſent leſſened by thoſe mercileſs flames, out of which the providence of God ſaved this Book (when it was in a manner

manner all printed off save this Preface) that this preservation of it is some excuse for its appearance, and presage that it may not be altogether fruitless: But this being waved, that which was his answer in the Preface, which those forementioned flames consumed, when the Book it self escaped, is, that he is not much read in our English books, and so knows not what or how many of this nature are extant; but that

that of those, which it hath been his lot to see, he knows none, which do more aim at the hitting the genius and humour of every mans devotion (be he of what judgment he will) than he hath done in this; and that, be the Reader a conformable person, or any of the contrary perswasions, if he be but serious, and resolved not to reject the main, which he cannot but like, for a page or two, which though he may not much brook,

yet he can ſcarce be very angry with; the Author believes ſuch perſon will not think his pains to no purpoſe: However, that, in this hope he cannot but be confident, that the meer writing and publiſhing hereof will be a perpetual engagement to himſelf of a more ſtrict and circumſpect life; and that therefore, if in none other, yet in this reſpect, it comes not forth in vain.

Withnall.

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Enter into thy *Closet.*

OR, A METHOD For Private Devotion

Part I. Chap. I.

Of the necessity of Privacy, and those Christian duties which require it.

THat person can no wise be esteemed a serious and through Christian, uprightly and cordially discharging his duty towards God, who is a stranger unto privacy, and useth not to withdraw himself from company, even

Part. I. Chap. 1.

the company of his neereſt freinds, preſenting himſelf alone before God: For that beſides the worſhip of God, which we performe to him in the *publick aſſemblies*, and joyntly with the reſt of the *Family*, of which we are members, beſides, I ſay, praying, hearing, and receiving, &c. in the Church, and praying with the people of our own houſe, there are ſeveral religious duties to be performed by us, without which the power of godlineſſe can never be kept alive in our hearts, nor the ſervice, which before or with others we do unto God almighty, be through, hearty and compleat; which duties I ſay can never be performed as they ſhould be, if we are in company. To wit,

First it is indiſpenſibly neceſſary that a Chriſtian often examine himſelf, take account of his own ſtate and actions, whether his heart be ſo ſtedfaſt in holy purpoſes as it hath been or ought to be, or as he hath vowed to God it ſhould be: whether his practice

practices of late have been answerable to such resolutions and engagements, as he hath made: or whether his heart be more indifferent and careless than it was, his actions more loose and irregular; This, I say, is absolutely necessary to an holy life: for that without it he may insensibly go back and grow worse, he may delay his returns unto God, or not return after several wandrings, and (if suddenly catcht) die without the particular repentance of many sins. Part I. Chap. 1.

Secondly, it is as necessary that a Christian confesse himself to Almighty God, that is, that having taken such an account of his wandrings, he acknowledg them, bewaile them and beg pardon of them before God.

Thirdly, because repentance cannot be without reformation, it is necessary that he consult and consider with himself how he may grow better; what occasions of his sins there were, which may be avoided;

Part. I. Chap. I.

what means of the contrary virtues, which may be used; and resolve seriously with himself, that these and these occasions he will avoid, these and these means use.

Now forasmuch as such resolutions can never be upright and firme, except made with deliberation, heed and thoughtfullness; and forasmuch as such deliberation cannot be taken in company, nor all things duly weighed, where we have a crowd of occasions and objects to take of our thoughts, it is therefore necessary that for such work we be alone: and in the other cases, because that examination of our selves must needs be very slighty & short, which we make while we sit and talk with others; because also those confessions, which we make in publick or with others, may be, and most frequently are, too generall to reach our particular cases and sins, it is therefore necessary for the doing of them also, that we retire or go alone.

And to Conclude, becauſe he that would keep himſelf cloſe to the waies of holineſs, muſt do all theſe things often, it is therefore neceſſary, that he be often alone, at leaſt as often as with any tollerable convenience he can, and, to that purpoſe, if his condition admitt or will afford it, that he have a place convenient to retire to, which we will call a *Cloſet*.

Chap. II.

Of the Situation and furniture of their Cloſet who have choice.

NOw (it being ſuppoſed that my condition allowes me ſo much choice, as that I might have it ſo) my *Cloſet* would I have no unpleaſant place, as ſweetly ſituated as any place of my houſe, that I might delight to be therein; and by no means a low or darkſome room, but

Part. I. Chap. 1.

as high as I well could: for that so it will be most remote from the noise, company, and disturbance of the people who are busied usually below; and besides that, some secret property there is in such high and eminent places, whence we may behold the heavens and overlook the earth, which to me much raiseth the soul and elevates the affections, as if we derived or partaked more from heaven, by how much neerer we come to it. Our *Saviour* therefore used to go up *into a mountain to pray*: and *St. Peter went up upon the house* for the same purpose, that is probably into an upper room such as the *Disciples* were assembled in. And if it might be my passage thereunto should be through two other outer rooms, at least through one, the door or doors of which I might ever have shut when I thither retired, to the end that my voice, which many times I shall have occasion, for my own quickening, to use, might not to be heard without.

Acts 10. 9.

Acts 1. 13. & 20. 8.

Part. I. Chap. 2.

The furniture of my closet I would have a little more, than that of *Elisha's* chamber, *A Table a Stool and a Candlestick*: and instead of his bed, an hard *couch* or great chair on which I might some times lean my weary or aching head: But a couch the rather for that sometimes I haply might find it necessary to spend the whole night there, and might thereon take some repose. To these I would add a *Bible*, a *Common prayer book*, two *paper books* (which when fild must be supplyed by two others) and a *Pen* and *Inke*. Another book or two (of which hereafter) I may also see occasion to add to these. A chimney, against winters cold, to make the place endurable, if need be, a whole night, would be no contemptible convenience. If besides these I there keep any thing, as Students do books, Gentlemen writings, and Ladies Medicins, &c. all these I would have placed on one side, or at least, one side I would have free from them,

2 Kings 4. 10.

Part. I. Chap. 3. againſt which ſhould either ſtand a table, or a *Praying deſk* (that when occaſion ſhould be I might lay a book or paper before me) and the wall over ſuch deſk or table ſhould be hung (if I were able to do it) with ſome ſtuff, of one colour, (Green the beſt) to the end that when there kneeling at my prayers, I might have in mine eye nothing to call away or divert my thoughts.

Chap III.

Of my moſt Common entrance into my Cloſet.

MY *Cloſet* being thus *fitted*, it is ſuppoſed that my recourſe thereto is either more or leſs ſolemn. At no time (except upon moſt earneſt and haſty occaſions) ſhould my entrance thereto, want the ſolemnity of a *ſhort* (but hearty) *Prayer*. For this being a place principally deſigned for my devout retirement, and

and the performance of thoſe private acts of worſhip which I owe to God, it becomes, by this its end and deſignement, after a ſort ſeparate or ſacred, a certain ſecret Chappel for my ſelf; and may not therefore wantonly or ſlightly be by me entred into. I ſay, not by *Me*: for what ever it is to others to me ought it to be reverend. As therefore, when our ordinary occaſions call us into our through Churches, we uſually out of Reverence to him, to whom thoſe places are devoted, and in memory of thoſe ſpirituall feaſts, which we or our Chriſtian brethren have there and in ſuch places taſted, fall down on our knees and worſhip God, begging his bleſſing upon us & his people, as often as there aſſembled, and praiſing him for the benefits which we or his people have there partaken of; ſo when I come, though upon common matters, into my cloſet, yet conſidering with my ſelf, that I am now in that place, where-

Part I. Chap. 3.

Part. I. Chap. 3.

in I have so often worshipped (or at least resolved often to worship) God, and had sweet converse with him, in memory thereof, and for reasons hereafter mentioned I would kneel down and pray, to this or the like effect.

My good God, whom I here frequently and with my heart worship, Bless me I beseech thee in the affaires I go about. Keep my heart with thee, at least ever keep it upright before thee: And as often as I here present my self, let thy good Spirit be present with me, to dispose me unto, and assist me in thy service, through Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

And having thus or otherwise, as I am able, or have opportunity, prayed, I would forthwith apply my self to what I intended.

Now

Part. I. Chap. 3.

Now such course observed, as often as I enter my *Closet*, will be many waies advantageous to me. First, it will be a means to keep my heart much with God, and to recall it to him, in case my thoughts have too much wandred from him. It will make me spirituall in ordinary matters and converse. Secondly, it may be a means to procure a blessing upon my undertakings. Thirdly, I may the better expect Gods presence there, when I come purposely to seek him.

It needs not after this discourse, to admonish that we ever take heed what matters here we do. I would not choose this as a place of my vainer discourse, or freer hours, as some do; who are ever severest in company, and allow themselves liberty in private or amongst their confidents, whom if they can but get into such a place, where neither mens eye, nor ear can reach them (as the closet for the main is supposed to be.) their company shall be

Part I. Chap. 3.

be vain and frolick to as high a degree almost as any mens. *I take it, and I am greatly deceived if I mistake it, for a certain argument, that the serious belief of a God and of the world to come, is much wanting in his heart, who dare be naught, idle, or sinfully merry, if he can but get out of mans sight and cognizance.*

PART

Part II.

Treating of *Daily Closet-Duties.*

Chap. I.

That if I am a person of leisure, I ought daily, twice in the day, to retire into my Closet *for devotions sake.*

It followeth now to be considered of my more solemn retirement or entrance into my *Closet.* Now that I account a solemn recourse thither, when my business there is purely devotion. And such recourse is either ordinary, or more special.

My

Part. II. Chap. I.

My ordinary retirement into my *Closet* should be daily, and that if my condition will conveniently admit, as most mens may twice a day: oftener I may, as at noon, seldomer I well cannot.

I am bound thereto upon the same grounds, upon which I am bound to pray twice a day: and the sum of them is, that the command saith, *Pray continually*; the meaning of which we cannot but take to be, 1. either pray alwaies when you may for other duties (that is, so much time as thou canst spare from the work of thy calling and due care of thy body, and other offices of Charity and Piety, spend in that duty of prayer) or else 2. (parallel to that of the *continual burnt Offering* which was called *Continual*, because ever *continued* in its course twice a day.) Keep a continuall course of prayer morning and evening. And this the practices of the Saints in Scripture (which we may look upon as Exemplifications of

of that forenamed command) to wit, the Practice of David praying *Evening, Morning, and at Noon,* of *Daniel* as many times, and none that we read of less than twice, cannot but enforce upon us, as the least which can be our duty in this case. Part. II. Chap. 1. Psal. 55. 7. Dan. 6.

If any think they are excused from private prayer twice a day, by their praying twice a day with the Family, of which they are a part, They are to understand, that there is no particular strict command, touching the nature of our daily devotions, prescribing them to be either publick, or private, or both: but that it is most just and equitable that *God should have a liberal part of our time, as well as of our estates*: that therefore if our condition be such, that besides the time, which we spend in prayer with the Family (which no one, who would have God to bless his Family, can think he may neglect) we have convenient leisure from other necessary matters, it cannot be better bestow- Dr. Ham. Pract. Catech. Lib. 3. sect. 2.

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Part II. Chap. I.

ed, than in our *Closet*, and upon our *Soules*. And it will questionlesse be a piece of very sinfull vanity, to trifle it away, and omit what it might so well have been imployed upon; According as in matter of my estate, if after sufficient necessaries and conveniences provided for my self and Family, there do yet remain in my hand a portion of what God hath given me, I cannot but look upon it as my duty, to supply therewith the necessities of those who want; and as my sin, for me idly to squander it away, which might have fild so many hungry bellies, or cloathed so many naked or ragged backs. Further, God having injoyned me the duty of prayer, but left the particular frequency of it, after the nature of other freewill-offerings, to my Christian discretion, I ought not to be therefore the more heedless: but rather, because I know my sacrifice will be ever accepted how often soever brought with an honest heart, out of an holy ambition.

ambition of pleasing God and sending up an odour of a sweet savour unto heaven, to bring it as often as I can: And surely twice a day I may present even my private devotions.

If I be single and in my own power, there is no question but I may: If I be the Master or Mistris of a Family, there is little question of it: If I be a servant, or one who works for my living, there is indeed somewhat the more question; for that not only I may be straightned in time, but want the conveniency of privacy. But, yet even in this case, what hinders, but that being I cannot do so well as I would, I may do so well as I can? to wit, rising one piece of an hour ordinarily sooner, or lying down so much later, fall down upon my knees by my self at my beds side, and privately poure out my confessions and prayers before God. And what if my fellow servant be with me? Why should I be ashamed to do, before him

Part. II. Chap. I.

him, what he cannot but acknowledg he alſo ought to do? ſhall I not one day much more bluſh and be confounded at the omiſsion of my duty before *Men* and *Angels* and *God* himſelf, than here at the performance of it? And which ſhame rather to be choſen? That before God, all Men, Angels, Devils, than this before one or two? That which is eternall, or this, which after I have once or twice deſpiſed, I ſhall be troubled with no more? Begin to do ſo, and after the firſt or ſecond time, thou wilt never be aſhamed of it; I aſſure thee at leaſt thou wilt never repent.

This then ſhould be my ordinary retirement twice a day.

Our more ſpecial retirement ought to be upon *Lords daies*, *Holy daies*, and our own *private Faſt daies*, each of which will come hereafter to be conſidered. In the mean time our daily retirement and devotions muſt be proceeded with.

Chap.

Chap. II.

Considerations to perswade to daily devotion and prayer in private.

AND to the end I may be sure to keep such course as beforesaid, let me sit down and seriously weigh.

First, the concernment, importance and vast moment of those things, which by prayer I am to seek and may obtain, above the other, upon which most of my time is spent. What is it of worldly goods, which will not pass away (at least as to me and my injoyment of it) with myself? I dying, all dyes with me: my estate, my honours, my freinds, and all such, are no more comfortable to me, when death once appears; but haply a torment, being that they are all now to be left. It is therefore but to the end of my threescore

Part II. Chap. 2.

threeſcore years and ten (if I ſhould live ſo long) or thereabouts, that theſe can be good at all: And of theſe my threeſcore years and ten (which it is a thouſand to one whether ever I reach) how many are already gone? Perhaps one Moyety, perhaps more. So then all thoſe things, which my other time ſeeks, are of a pitifull ſhort and tranſient concernment. But the graces of Gods ſpirit, an holy heart, a good conſcience, reconciliation with my heavenly Father, theſe and ſuch like, are not only of concernment for my preſent happineſs but for my eternall. The richeſt, honorableſt and moſt worldly-happy Man, if devoid of grace, an enemy unto God, conſcious to himſelf of villany, cannot in all his abundance here enjoy or like himſelf, much leſs either account himſelf, or be accounted, an happy perſon. For what can that Man acquieſce in, whoſe own heart calling him a rogue layes a fatall neceſsity upon him to hate

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and to be ever and anon ready to execrate himself? Certainly there is no present possible happiness, which is comparable to that blessed calm and quiet, which ariseth from the sense of a Mans one upright heart and discharged duty. Insomuch that were there no such thing as an heaven to come, I should not fear to pronounce, that that man neglects those things which are of greatest conducement to his present happiness who neglects to seek unto God, to commune with his own heart, to set all straight and to reclaim himself to an holy life, the great means by which such peace, the most reall felicity in the world, can be had. But suppose we such a person ready to die, *and it said unto him, Thou fool this night shall thy soule be taken from thee*; his peace being unmade with God, himself unacquainted with heaven, his conscience telling him that all his time hath been spent on what he must now leave, and no provision made

Luk. xii. 20.

Part. II. Chap. 2. Rom. 11. 12.

(but of *a treasure of wrath against the day of wrath*) for that eternal state, into which death is his entrance; is he not now a most unhappy wretch? Is it not to him a pain equal to the paines of death to think he must leave all? Hath he not therefore, by devoting himself to this world, and scraping together such an ample portion thereof, only made himself more miserable, and that in this present life? For is there any misery here, like to that anguish, which racks such a soul upon his now instant departure? And would I, then, so spend my time that I might, by the spending of it become more miserable than any save those who have lived as I. Would I so spend it, as that the very thinking or reflecting how I had spent it, should then most torment me, when I have most need of comfort, to wit in my dying hour? And yet thus do all men spend their days who neglect their devotions, or duties of daily addresse unto God.

But further ſuppoſe we ſuch a perſon dead; and we have him ſtript of all even his imaginary happineſſe, naked of every thing ſave his ſins: Of theſe *his bones are full and they ſhall lye down with him in the duſt.* His *workes follow* him and his *wayes* meet him. Evident therefore it is, that what he hath ſpent his life upon, is now of no concernment or moment to him at all, any otherwiſe, than to render him for ever as miſerable as he can be. And is this a deſirable end for a man all his dayes to be driving at; to be miſerable in life by reaſon of an evill conſcience, or an impoſſibility of liking and loving himſelf; to be miſerable in death, by the advancing of that diſquiet, his former torment; and moſt miſerable after death by the perfection of that and all other miſchiefs? Whereas, if ſome of thoſe dayes which the world employed been taken up in ſeeking unto God, how might that portion have ſanctified all the reſt, have led him to a right

Part. II. Chap. 2.

Job. 10. 11.

Part II. Chap. 2.

right improvement of what he got, and that improvement of all been an unspeakable pleasure and content to him here, and hereafter have wrought him an eternity of blessedness! Not to mention that unspeakable satisfaction, which the hearty performance of such devotions, through the bloud of Christ, would have filled him with, which we may hereafter consider. Whoso therefore truly loves himself will love his *Closet* and his *Prayers*.

Secondly, Let me weigh the *Reasonablenesse* hereof, that *God* should have a *considerable part* of my *Time*, who hath given me *so much* for my *self*, and the *unreasonablenesse* of the *contrary*. Let me deal ingeniously: may not God well expect more of my time, than what is by any law set apart or consecrate to this worship? And it being the genuine Evangelicall sense of the fourth commandement, Keep all thy life an *holy rest from doing thy own workes delighting thy self* and acquiescing ever

ever in *the Lord*, will it not in a good measure hold thus, Reſt as much as thou canſt to thy devotions, ſpend as many houres as thou canſt with God? Or ſuppoſe that this law would not in equity bind me hereunto (which yet it ſeems to do) is it not reaſonable, that there ſhould be free will offerings of our time as as well as of our eſtates? And will there be any better way found for the imploying of what we can ſpare thereof, than the thus ſanctifiing and devoting it unto God? I am confident whatever mens practices may be, their conſciences cannot gainſay but do highly approve and commend to them what is preſſed. We may complain fondly of the *ſhortneſſe of time*: but evident it is that we ſpend much upon this world; much upon our gaines, much upon our pleaſures, much upon our ambitions, much alſo upon thoſe neceſſary acts of life, Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, and much to upon (God knowes) we know not what.

Part. II. Chap. 2. Iſai. 58. 13, 14.

Part. II. Chap. 2. Now let those who account themselves to have least leisure, find but time enough to consider, when they go to bed every night, how much time they have lost, or trifled away, that day, and setting it down every night, reckon at the weeks end, and see, to how many hours it will amount. Do so but one week or two, and see if you do not blush at the ordinary excuse for neglect of prayer, that you have not time. For the issue will be of these two, the one own either my whole time hath been really imployed, and that upon my common affaires and necessary care of my body, or else some part of it (to wit, so much as hath not been imployed) hath been trifled away. Now (*utrum horum*) Let me take which I please. If it be supposed all to have been imployed, is it not most unreasonable, that worldly businesse and my body should have all, and God and my soul have none, or next to none? Did God make me for himself, and allot me such a measure

ſure of time for his glory and for provision for my ſoul, and are they only ſome few minutes, which I can find either for him or it? Was, I ſay, every day given me for theſe ends, and can I ſpend all without conſiderable ſeeking either, as I do if I allow nothing to private devotion? Ought I not therefore to leſſen my buſineſſe, rather than neglect the great ends of my being? If, on the other ſide, a conſiderable part of my time were loſt and trifled away (as I dare ſay infallibly it will appear upon due account taken) is not this a moſt unreaſonable part in me, that I can find time to looſe, and yet no time to pray? Part. II. Chap. 2.

And further, Thirdly, it may ſomewhat quicken me, if I conſider, that though it ſhould be queſtioned whether it be ſtrictly my duty *thus and thus oft to pray*, becauſe there may ſeem to be wanting an expreſſe command, yet I cannot but be ſenſible that it is my duty *to pray, and to pray often*, (for, this there are not

Part. II. Chap. 2. wanting commands) and that therefore prayer being a duty and well pleasing unto God, the more thereof is performed, the more acceptable service do I do to God: provided, prayer thrust not out my other duties. The frequency, I say, can never offend, except in the case of neglecting other duties to performe it: and herein commonly men are not apt to be guilty. Suppose it therefore not to offend in this case beirg that it is a duty, it must please, and please the more, by how much it self is more. Now this to ingenuity is no mean incentive unto prayer, that hereby I please my God, and delight heaven.

Fourthly, Let me consider, that as Prayer it self is the most powerfull and effectuall means, that a Christian can use for the effecting of all he would, so there is no prayer more powerfull than that which is most frequent and importunate. In generall as the power of prayer, it is such that it seems to have done violence

violence to omnipotency it ſelf; as in the caſe of Moſes when God as though graciouſly held or reſtrained bids him *let him alone*: and in ſome cauſes, if duly performed, God hath as it were allowed it to *command* him. But what or whoſe prayers are they, which are thus powerfull? Surely not theirs, who ſo ſeldom come to heaven, that if it were for nothing elſe, but becauſe they are ſuch ſtrangers, they would not ſpeed: but theirs rather, whoſe daily and frequent application of themſelves to the throne of grace, hath rendred them there well acquainted and favourites. We may therefore obſerve, that *the moſt abſolute and encouraging promiſes of being heard, are made to the importunate ſuitors.* The widdow in the parable, whom injuſtice it ſelf could not deny, was ſuch, and therefore ſped becauſe ſuch, becauſe ſhe came ſo often. And that precept, each gradation of which hath a promiſe proportionably attemporated and

Part. II. Chap. 2.
Exo. 32. 10
Iſai. 45. 2.
Luk. 18.

Part. II. Chap. 2.

fitted thereunto, as it prescribes, so chiefly encourageth importunity, that is, *frequency* as well as *fervency*.

Matth. 7. 7. It is not said, onely *Aske*, nor onely *Seek*, but both, and *Knock* besides. The last alone, *viz.* Knocking, implies frequency, and therefore much more do all the three. And to the *Knocking*, as being of all the three the clearest denotation or expression of importunity, it is promised *It shall be opened*: as if it had been said, those who onely aske and seek may come to speed; but those who knock, those who are oft and and earnest in their prayers, shall have the treasures of heaven *opened* and free to them, out of which to take full satisfaction and supply.

Now because all these things are so, therefore can it not be but that the *benefit* of such practice must be *unspeakable*, which as another (and for the present the last) incitement unto daily private devotion is worthy my consideration. First, as to the inward temper of my heart

(which

(which rightly to diſpoſe, and ſo diſpoſed to keep, is a matter of the greateſt concernment to an holy life) there can be nothing thought of more effectual than ſuch practice, nor can it indeed well be conceived, how that mans heart can be kept in a thorow ſenſe of his duty, and cloſe with God, who maintaines not ſome ſuch daily courſe of devotion as is under preſent conſideration. Part. II. Chap. 2.

1. The maintaining hereof will keep alive in me a continual fear and awfull apprehenſion of God; it will habituate me, in all my wayes, often to think upon and remember him. Now there is nothing, the apprehenſion of which is of more wholeſome conſequence unto a man, than of God and his all-ſeeing eye. One who is ſenſible and mindfull hereof, cannot be long vain, but, if he do forget himſelf at any time, will ſoon return to his old ſerioufneſſe.

2. Such practice will alſo much conduce to the keeping of me hum-

Part. II. Chap. 2.

ble, as being ſenſible of (becauſe often minding) my ſins: my ſins I ſay from my youth up to my preſent years, my perpetual proneſſe and frequent relapſes unto vicious courſes. Theſe, being matter of my daily confeſſions thoughts and meditations, cannot but in ſome good meaſure keep under any towring or proud conceits, which I am apt to have of my ſelf.

3. It will alſo make and keep me tender, affectionate, and truly Zealous in my ſervice of God. There will be in me an habitual preparation for all duryes; inſomuch that I can no ſooner be at them and have engaged my ſelf in them, but with a great deal of vivacity and readineſſe of Spirit, and with many inward meltings of heart I ſhall converſe in them: this being not onely my daily but my frequent practice, at leaſt frequent endeavour.

4. It muſt therefore much increaſe all manner of Chriſtian graces in my Soul: inaſmuch as grace, according

cording as we now ſpeak thereof, is nothing elſe but the due diſpoſition and reſolution of the ſoul, which as is evident will be the natural conſequent and fruit of ſuch practice. Part II. Chap. 2.

Secondly, it will have a very wholeſome influence upon my life, as in all caſes elſe, ſo eſpecially in this, that I ſhall at no time carry on any deſigne, which I dare not bring unto the teſt of heaven, and beg thereon the bleſſing of the God of Holineſſe.

Laſtly, the mercies which I receive in my own perſon, in my relations, in all my affaires as procured and impetrated from God by theſe my daily and frequent prayers will be innumerable; and that inward comfort and clearneſſe of heart, with which I ſhall entertain and receive theſe mercies, or any thing elſe, which comes from the hand of my gracious God, inexpreſſible. The ſame mercies evidently are not the ſame to all men, no more than

Part II. Chap. 2.

are the same chastisements. But to whomsoever mercies are greater mercies, or afflictions lesse afflictions, it cannot be but that to him who thus conscientiously daily converseth with God, all must be most kindly.

Now the consideration of all, which I have thus meditated, cannot sure but move me to some measure of diligence in these duties. If therefore at any time negligence begin to grow over me, it may be of good effect to read over and duly to weigh these or the like motives, that I may be quickened to resume, and proceed with, my proposed course: and what that course should be, it followes in the next place that I consult.

Chap.

Chap. III.

Of the substance of every dayes private devotion; To persons of leisure, Reading, Meditation, *and* Prayer.

THe private devotion of every day will be different to particular persons according as their conditions differ, from such who are servants or lead a servile life, I mean all those who get their living by their daily labour, whose abilities of mind are therefore meaner and and whose privacy more difficult, from such I say no more than this may seem to be expected, that both in the morning being risen, and at night being about to lye down, they in the fear of God fall down before him and pray unto him, touching which directions will anon follow.

From those, whose way of life being more liberal, their abilities and

Part II. Chap 5. Luk 12. 48.

and opportunities are greater, more may seem justly to be looked for, according to that rule, *To whom much is given, from them shall much be required.* Speaking therefore to to such who have estates and leisure, and so may have opportune privacy, I suppose their daily private devotion cannot be compleat, except consisting of *Reading Meditation* and *Prayer.*

Touching *private Prayer* it hath been before spoken and nothing now can by such, whom the present consultation concerneth, be said for the dispensing with it, being it is even their duty, who are of meaner quality and capacity and therefore much more theirs, who are of greater. Touching *Reading* and *Meditation*, if any suspicion arise, it will easily be removed by those commands, which enjoyn us that we

John 5. 39. Deuter. 6. Coloss. 3. 16.

Search diligently *the Scriptures, that the word of God dwell plentifully in us*, and by such Characters of righteous persons, as that they are such

whose delight is in the Law of the Lord, and who *meditate therein day and night*. And certainly such commands being capable to be intended or remitted (I mean being to be construed with some regard) and according to that general rule aforementioned [*to whom much is given from him much shall be required*,] cannot but be interpreted to require greater and more diligent *Searching* (that is more of *Reading* and *Meditating* upon) Scripture, from those who have greater opportunity and ability to do it, than they do from others who are meaner in both. Of such an one therefore, who hath not time every day, or if he haply have, yet cannot read, it may be thought he dischargeth his duty of *searching the Scripture* if in a way proportionable to his ability he endeavour to acquaint himself with Scripture, to wit, by a diligent attention to it, and inquiring of it (as he hath conveniency) when it is read or preached. But of such an one

Part II. Chap. 3. Psal. 1.

Part II. Chap. 3.

one who can *read* and hath time to *meditate* on what he reads, and whom, it may be, it concerns to instruct others in the knowledg of Scripture (as being over them) of such an one, I say, being that more is required, than of the other, it cannot in reason be thought, that he hath done his duty by bare attention unto Scripture read, except he himself read and meditate therein. And he will very hardly (we may not fear to say, not at all) approve himself to be a Godly man, if he behave not himself as Godly men did of old, that is if he *delight not in the Law of the Lord*, and therein daily *meditate*. If I should doubt therefore, whether it be strictly my duty *day* and *night*, *morning* and *evening* to read the Scriptures and meditate, I cannot doubt (for I see plain evidence for it) that it is a Godly mans Character, one part of his practice as he is a Godly man, to *read* and *meditate*, if therefore I intend to be a Godly man, it must be my care and practice too. Where-

Wherefore of these three, *Reading*, *Meditation*, and *Prayer*, seeing that none may be well omitted (at least not ordinarily neglected) it is requisite more particular consideration be had. Part. II. Chap. 4.

Chap. IIII.

Of Reading the Holy Scripture. The most edifying method and manner of Reading it consulted of.

BY *Reading* here I understand reading the sole word of God, and this as it should constantly (for the main at least, if not ever) have a place in my daily devotions in private, so therein, me thinks, will most conveniently take place in the beginning of them, on this wise. Being entered into my *Closet* for my devotions sake, it becomes me first in all humility and out of the fear of God, not out of custome, to fall down.

Part II. Chap. 4

down before him, and in ſhort according to former direction to beg his bleſsing upon me and preſence with me there preſenting my ſelf to worſhip before his majeſty: To which purpoſe the Form *already delivered may be proper either for uſe, or further direction, according as I ſhall ſee fit. This being done, forthwith let me apply my ſelf to the reading ſome portion of the word, according to my prefixed courſe. And what courſe ſhall that be?

*Part. 1. Chap. 3.

Modeſty would preſently anſwer, The ſame which the wiſdome of the Church hath preſcribed for publick uſe. And the truth is (the Church conſulting herein, as ſhe ought, the edification of the people) this order hath, in this point, the advantage of all other, that it will lead us to read over all the moſt uſefull parts of Scripture and thoſe moſt frequently: to wit, the New Teſtament, excepting onely ſome Chapters of the *Revelation*, three times a year; the

Pſalms.

Psalmes once a month; the *Old* Testament (excepting onely the two books of *Chronicles*, which are for the most part extant in the *Kings* and *Samuel*, and some other Chapters of other books, chiefly relating to the *Jewish* state) once in a year. But then if we consider its complyance with our present designe, it hath these two exceptions lying against it. First that the portions of Scripture, by that order to be read daily, are greater than what every mans or most mens conveniency will afford time to read, and meditate upon, as it is (supposed at present) best for a devout Christian to do. And then Secondly, that by this means a considerable part of the *Old* Testament and some part of the *New* will be left out; which parts are not questionless without their use, though, comparitively, not so necessary for the publick commonalty as the other. And to the Churches prescription it may be said, that it was never the Churches intention to

Part. II Chap. 4.

to prescribe this order for mens *Closets* in private, where she can neither take notice of their observing nor neglecting it, but onely for publick edification and uniformity.

This order therefore being taken not to be so proper for our present purpose, the next which will offer it self will be the natural order of the books in which they lye. Now this, though not liable to the exceptions, which we found against the former (being that nothing then will be omitted, nor the Reader overburdened with too great a portion, being he is left to himself) yet hath this inconveniency, that it will detain the observer of it a great while in those parts of Scripture, which may not edifie him so much, as would the other: so that haply *Reading* shall be a duller and lesse spiritual an exercise, than it would be, did he more wisely order it. Yet hath it this advantage also, that the *Revelations* of God and eternal life being still clearer in each succeeding part of Scripture

Scripture (I mean clearer in the *Prophets* than in the *Law* and in the *Gospel* than in either) one months reading may make me see more into that of the former month, and all lead me to the magnifiing of God for the prefent manifeſt revelation of his will. Part. II. Chap. 4.

Theſe things being ſo, it may haply conduce moſt to our private edification if we keep ſtrictly to neither of theſe orders, but obſerving the conveniences and inconveniences of each to our private purpoſe, according to our Chriſtian diſcretion frame to our ſelves one out of both, which may have the commodities of both, and incommodity of neither. And that may be ſuch as this: To begin every Reading with a *Pſalm*, or, where the *Pſalms* are very long, with a good portion of one, taking the *Pſalms* in their courſe: (This I therefore commend, by reaſon of the exceeding uſefullneſſe of that book of *Pſalms* for prayer, it furniſhing a man with petitions,

Part II. Chap. 4.

petitions, hymnes and ejaculations of all sorts, and besides discovering very much of the hearty practice of *Devotion* and *Godlinesse*.) That being finisht, in the morning to take in order as the books and Chapters lye, such a portion of the *Old* Testament, as my Christian prudence, considering my own conveniences and occasions, shall judge fit: which, where the matter affords more work for *Meditation*, may be shorter, where less, larger. In like manner at evening, beginning with a like portion of the *Psalmes*, take a part of the *New* Testament, as it lyes in order, greater or less, according, as beforesaid, it findes my devotion work. Some such course as this would I observe, till I had read over the *Holy* Scripture twice or thrice with such care, attention and meditation, as shall presently be described; by which time I should begin to be a little verst in it, and to know what parts of Scripture I used to read with greatest Christian advantage

advantage, which therfore afterwards I would read oftener than the other; setting alwaies a mark at the name of each book, as they ſtand in the *Table* at the beginning of my Bible, when I had read that book over, that ſo I might know how often I had read each, leſt I come too long to neglect the reading of any. This as to the *Order* of my *Reading*.

Having now my work thus orderly before me, it remains in the next place that I look to the beſt *manner* of doing it: whither belong the following rules.

Firſt, that I endeavour to read with compoſedneſſe of mind and attention, not onely to the ſenſe, ſubſtance, or ſubject matter of what I read, but as to the very expreſſions of it. For that the very expreſſions of Scripture are not onely very uſefull in prayer (God loving to hear his children call upon him in his own language) but do alſo many times carry in them ſuch ſecret emphaſes and force, as ſhall much comfort

Part. II. Chap. 4

comfort ſupport, aw, and otherwiſe affect the heart which conſiders them.

Secondly, that I be ſure, as I read, to obſerve the ſcope and drift of that portion of Scripture, which I read. For as to particular paſſages, it may ſo happen, that the plain reader may many times ſcarce underſtand them, they puzling even learned heads: but as to the ſcope of the whole, as to that which the *Holy Ghoſt* cheifly drives at, this may be commonly more eaſily underſtood: and this being underſtood doth not onely enſure me of ſo much benefit as I have underſtood of it, but will give eſpecial light unto thoſe darker places, whoſe meaning I do not ſo well conceive.

Thirdly, That if ever I intend this part of my devotion, to wit my *Reading*, ſhould be acceptable to God, or otherwiſe than a witneſſe againſt my ſelf, I reſolve upon the impartiall practice of whatſoever I by reading find to be in Scripture command-

commanded, and eschewing of whatsoever I there find forbidden. Such godly purpose will encrease my very knowledg; *For the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will teach them his Statutes*: whereas others, who bring not a resolution of such conscientious practice, but bearly inquisitive diligence, may come to be in a greater measure ignorant of his mind. Part. II. Chap. 5. Psal. 25. 14.

Chap. V.

Of Meditation, and the most edifying course in it.

THese rules being thus observed, and a certain portion of *Holy* Scripture thus read, it will be proper for me in the next place to proceed to *Meditation.*

Now *Meditation* here I take not for the simple thinking of any thing divine, which shall offer it self, but for

Part II. Chap. 5.

for an orderly and serious consideration of the particulars following.

1. Upon that portion of Scripture, which I have read.

2. Upon my own state and waies.

3. Upon the prayers (that is, confessions petitions and thanksgivings) which I am presently to offer up unto God.

Touching the first there are these three things for me to consider.

Frst, If I have not, as I read, been able to understand the design and drift of the *Holy* Ghost in what I have read, let me consider touching that: and, by a short reveiw of it, comparing the parts or several materials spoken of, and attending how they hang together, endeavour to comprehend their substance and scope. He reads to no purpose who reads not thus; for it is not repeating the words of Scripture, but understanding and digesting their sense and substance, which is to be accounted reading the Scripture: and one Chapter thus read is worth ten hastily run over. Secondly,

Secondly, If there be in what I have read any difficult or harder place, which seems to contain any matter of practice or article of faith (I mean which is likely to instruct me in any thing necessary to be believed or done in order to my salvation) that let me consider, and endeavour thereof to find the meaning. As to those difficulties, which concern controversies, that is questionable opinions in divinity, or inquiries into matters of meer knowledge or speculation, (such things, which when they are known there is no end of them) these may be very well overlooked by an ordinary person. As for instance; Reading *Acts.* 13, (the last Paragraph or partition of the Chapter, which begins *vers.* 44.) I find therein (*viz.* *vers.* 48.) a certain difficult expression, *As many as were ordained unto life believed*. What *believing* and what *life* (ie, heaven and blessedness) mean I know: but what *ordained* unto *life* means,

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Part. II. Chap. 5.

means, I doubt; and truly need not much trouble my self to inquire. Sufficient it is that I conclude from thence, that *all they who shall obtain everlasting life are believers*, not one unbelieving or ungodly person shall ever enter into heaven, and therefore particularly that I resolve upon an honest cordial receiving of the Gospell, as my duty, if ever I intend for happinesse. Again, Reading *Exodus* 32. I find that *Moses took the Calfe they had made and burned it in the fire, and grownd it to powder*: How the burning gold in the fire, which onely purifies it ordinarily, should come to make it friable or brittle, that it might be grownd unto powder, I need not stand to inquire. A shorter and better way it is, to believe the matter feasible, and this relation true, as being part of Gods word: all I need to conclude thence is, that Idolatry is to be destroyed, and that in such sort as the people may not return to it again, but rather loath and abominate it, as we

do

do that which passeth through our bodies: and that it is the wisdom of Magistrates, whom it concerns to destroy it, as it was *Moses*'s, to find out and contrive such waies or Methods of destroying it. This is I say as much as can concern any ordinary person, and as for the curiosity touched it may safely be neglected. We give not rules to make a Divine but to direct a Christian. Now all such difficulties and curiosities being left out, I presume the difficulties, which arise in practicable matters will be but few. And for my help herein, it will be meet I reflect upon that which (according to the former rule) I found to be the scope or drift of that Scripture, and consider the difficulty with some relation or regard thereto, observing the occasion, upon which that expression came in. This will help me very much many times. But for my further help therein, if I am able, it would be expedient I had some short glosse, or book explaining

Part. II. Chap. 5.

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such matters: and truly what book to pitch upon, as best in this case, is not easy to resolve. For I suppose there are not many books of notes or commentaries upon the whole Bible in English, which meddle onely with necessary and practicable matters, omitting controversals, which a private Christian, to his better edification, may well spare. For the *New* Testament I much admire Dr. *Hammons* Paraphrase, and could ten thousand times wish such a piece were extant upon the whole. But yet it is too difficult for every plain reader. *Bishop Hall* hath a Paraphrase upon the whole Bible, which comes much neerer to our present designe: But I fear this is scarce. The frequentest, best, and innocentest that I know is *Diodates Annotations*: they have indeed a *Geneva tang* now and then, but pretty soberly. Some such book according as I can gett, I would furnish my self with, which I might consult touching the meaning of such

such difficult places as my Christian direction should tell me to be practicall, and for my necessary edification. Part. II. Chap. 5.

Thirdly, Having thus found out the design of that whole portion of Scripture which I have read, and the meaning of such particular Texts as I shall have occasion to search into, let me in my meditations cast over again, or recollect the substance of it, and consider, what am I the better for the reading hereof?

1. Am I instructed or further confirmed in any matter of faith?

2. Am I taught any duty which before I either was ignorant of, or neglected? Do I here find any precept or command which I never before took notice of, or had forgot, &c?

3. Is there any thing which may quicken me to any duty, in which I am slack, or deter me from any sin to which I am prone? Any threatning of Gods wrath? Any example of his judgments? Any promise of

Part. II. Chap. 3.

mercy? Any instance of blessings on his diligent servants?

4. Is there any thing which may strengthen me in any temptation, comfort me in any affliction, distrust? &c.

5. Is there any particular emphatical or affectionate speech which may at any time quicken me? Any proper petition, confession, invocation, thanksgiving or the like, which may be of use to me in prayer, or otherwise?

6. Is there any thing which I can observe of the experiences of holy men of old? any thing of the deceitfulness of sin? &c.

Through such heads as these may my meditations briefly run: which heads till I am perfect in, it may not be amiss to open this my book and examine what I have read according to these directions laid down. And if I am able, I shall find it an incredible benefit, in the end of these my meditations to use my pen, whensoever by any reading I have gained any

any more remarkable benefit, and to regiſter in one of my paper books (reſerved ever for this purpoſe, which I may account my *Memoriall*) that particular which I have gained: in which I need to obſerve no other method, but onely to write all the notes which I take out of any one book, as of *Matthew*, *Mark*, &c. together, that ſo at my ſecond or third reading that particular book over, I may ſee, what the ſecond or third reading of it advantaged me more than the firſt. And theſe notes thus taken, becauſe intended as helps to my memory, I muſt be ſure to find time within a convenient ſeaſon to review. This is a profitable courſe for me to obſerve in my ordinary meditations upon the Holy Scriptures.

The next thing which my meditations are to be imployed upon, is upon my particular *State and Waies*, which I am in ſome meaſure to take notice of, as well that I may be more circumſpect in ſuch particu-

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lars, wherein I shall find greater need of circumspection, as that I may be able to address my self to God in a way suitable to my condition. For my condition varying, my prayers ought to vary accordingly.

First then, As to my *Ways*, Let me consider what new temptations have befallen me, whether as to inward sins, such which are acted in the mind, or as to such which are matter of outward and bodily commission; how far my heart hath closed with them, and been overcome by them? And this is to be laid open before God.

Secondly, As to my present *Inward state*, the temper of my mind: Let me examine that, whether I find any relentings or meltings of heart for those my wandrings, which I have before viewed, any firmness and resolution for the future against the like: Accordingly I am to apply my self to God, either for the giving me a due sense of, and remorse for

for, and resolution and watchfulness against my sin, or for the heightning and strengthning those degrees hereof, which I already have. Part II. Chap. 1.

Thirdly, As to my *Outward state*; Let me consider, how Gods holy providence hath either favoured or crossed my ordinary affairs and designes: for accordingly still I am to address my self unto God in prayer; either by praising him for my successes, or bewailing those sins and omissions which I may judge have blasted them, or otherwise, as my Christian discretion shall suggest.

The last head, upon which my meditations are to be imployed is my *Prayers*, which I am now about to offer up unto God: in which, if I use a set form, I am to consider, where those new particulars of confession, petition, or praises must come in, after what sort they may be conveniently expressed, and sometimes (when my condition requires

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and my time will permit me to be more large or earneſt in any part of prayer) with what arguments I may ſtrengthen my faith, and plead with God touching what I deſire to ſpeed for; or again with what circumſtances of my ſins, or Gods mercies I may heighten my repentance for my ſins, or thankfulneſs for thoſe mercies. If I do not uſe my ſelf to a ſet form, then will it be neceſſary that I more deliberately meditate what I intend to confeſs, to aſk, to praiſe God for, how I ſhall ſo call upon him or conceive of him, as may ſuit with thoſe main and principal addreſſes, which I am to make to him. Whether every particular expreſſion, or the juſt words be forethought, it haply matters not very much: but that ſome fit ſignificant proper and quickning expreſſions, for the ſeveral parts and ſubſtantials of my prayer, be prepared, it is expedient, as well for the greater readineſs of the ſoul in prayer, which when it is much to

ſeek.

seek in this case, cannot do its duty with attention, nor without disturbance and intermission of due affection, as also that nothing unworthy of the nature of prayer, and the worship of God, may be offered up unto him. And in this point it may be singularly helpfull to consider, what of those expressions, promises, narratives, experiences, &c. which I have at any time read in the Word of God may be useful to me in those my intended addresses to the Throne of grace. God (as already intimated) loves to hear his own language from us, and so it is, that the very expressions of Scripture have a marvellous affecting power upon the devout heart, beyond those, which seem not to have been alike sanctified by the holy Ghost using them.

Chap.

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Chap. VI.

Of Prayer, and first of its substance and parts.

WHat I have *read* being thus digested through *Meditation*, and by the like meditation, preparation being made for *Prayer*, that now remains as the third and most compleat act of my daily devotion: touching which, besides the precepts already given, others yet remain to be given, when the consideration of the nature of the duty hath a little made way for them.

Now Prayer is the seeking unto God, and before him representing our Estate and Desires.

The general nature of prayer is a betaking or addressing our selves to God: and therefore its first act is *Invocation* or calling upon him. Now our condition, who are *dust & ashes* & his Majesty being considered, we

we cannot well be esteemed to seek unto him without adoration or worshiping of him in the beginning of these our addresses; for that in all seeking to Superiours we ever begin with some acknowledgments of their being above us, able to help us, &c. upon which accounts we use ordinarily some testimonies of reverence towards them. If we therefore put both these together, we have the first part of *Prayer*, to wit, *An invocatory adoration of God*, that is, *an humble calling upon him*, accompanied with *worshipping and adoring his infinite Majesty*. And this in most compleat prayers extant in Scripture we may observe: particularly in that for ever to be reverenced pattern, our Lords prayer, the first sentence contains what we speake of. [*Our Father*: this is a calling upon God. *Which art in Heaven*; these are words befitting one who adores his Majesty.] So in that prayer of *Hezekiah*, *Isaiah* xxxvii. 16. *O Lord of Hosts, God* Part II. Chap. 6.

of

Part. II. Chap. 6. *of Israel, that dwellest between the Cherubims: thou art God, even thou alone*, &c. How evidently doth this beginning of his prayer carry in it a calling upon God, accompanied with the acknowledgement and adoration of his Deity. The first part of prayer we gathered out of those words (expressing its general nature) it is a seeking unto God. The second we may gather out of them, which follow, it is a representing our estate before him. Our estates naturally are sinful and miserable. So far forth as we retain any thing of our old nature, so far are sin and misery inseparable adjuncts or attendants unto us. The representing therefore our estates before God, is the confessing our sins, and laying open our grievances and wants before him. A second part of prayer then is *Confession*.

That which all sinners should desire is pardon: that which all miserable persons do naturally desire is help. The representing then our desires

desires before God is the *begging mercy and grace to help in time of need*; that is,

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1. Pardon of sin.
2. Deliverance from our misery.
   Internal, by the sanctification of our hearts.
   External, by meet supplies of our outward wants.

A third act of prayer therefore is, *Petition or Asking*.

Somewhat more yet is considerable in our states here below, which though naturally miserable, as aforesaid, yet are by the manifold grace of God made in several respects more comfortable, by reason of variety of blessings. Now he that receives a benefit ought to have at the least a will and desire of thankfulness. He therefore who duely represents his state and desires unto God, lays open also before him those several mercies which at his hands he receives, humbly blessing and

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and praising him the author of them. The last part of prayer then is *Thanksgiving*.

Now because all these may be done either for our selves or others, therefore is prayer double, or of two sorts.

That which meerly respects our selves.

That which we offer up for others, called *Intercession*.

From all this it is evident, that the first thing, which he, who would learn to pray, must take care of, is, that he throughly know himself, that is, (1.) Be acquainted with his own state, with his sins, his miseries and wants, inward and outward: otherwise he can never duly represent them unto God. (2.) That he well know his own desires and resolutions, lest he play the hypocrite with God, *asking* what he desireth not, or *vowing* what he intends not. These are the substantials of prayer.

Chap.

Chap. VII.

Of the right manner of prayer. First, of its inward manner. Some considerations to quicken to sincerity and heartiness in Prayer. What graces are to be exercised in each part of Prayer.

THE manner of the performing every duty is much looked upon by God. Now prayer being such an immediate act of worship, and it being most just, reasonable, and necessary that we should worship God with the whole man, that is, both with soul and body, in the manner of prayer there can be onely considerable, its Inward and Outward part.

The inward manner of prayer is unquestionably most respected by God:

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God: for that according hereunto is the prayer, and the man, ſincere or otherwiſe. And the Conſideration hereof ſhould incite us cheifly to care herein. I may pray in as good & as many words, in as devout poſtures, and, in a word, after as pious a ſort, as to what there is outward in prayer, as ever man did, and yet be hypocritical in my prayers. But it is impoſsible, that I ſhould pray with my *Soul and all that is within me*, and not be cordial, honeſt and ſincere in thoſe prayers which I ſo make. And therefore as God doth, ſo, I ſay, every Chriſtian ought to look cheifly to the inward diſpoſition of his ſoul in his *Devotions*.

We may note further for our quickening herein, that God not onely requireth the heart in prayer, but hath accepted and often doth accept the inward breathings of it, and anſwer them as fully, as if all other circumſtances belonging to the outward manner of prayer had been obſerved.

observed. As in the case of *Hannah*, who in that so successfull and effectual prayer of hers *spake in her heart onely*. Part. II. Chap. 7.

Now prayer is then right as to its inward manner, when there is an hearty exercise of Christian graces and affections suitable to the substance of the prayer, which we offer up to God. (That is to say, to go through the parts of prayer.) *I adore and call upon God as I ought*, when in my calling upon him, I really believe that he is, and that he is such as he hath revealed himself to be, and as I now expresse or conceive him, and therefore with reverence humbly submit my self before his majesty. It is a piece of holy skill worthy taking notice of, which is observable in the prayers of holy men in Scripture. They usually so frame their invocations or callings upon God, as may suit with their main business at the throne of grace, and strengthen their faith for those particular mercies which they aske.

Thus

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Thus in that forenamed prayer of *Hezekias's* againſt the *Aſſyrian* Armies. *O Lord of hoſts* [for he prayed againſt a mighty hoſt, and for deliverance from it.] *God of Iſrael* [he therefore ſo cals God to put him in mind of his covenant with *Iſrael*, that he might ſtretch forth his hand for the deliverance of his own people.] *who dwelleſt between the Cherubims* [that is, who haſt here recorded thy name and promiſed to meet and bleſſe *and from thy mercy Seat* to anſwer thy people. He therefore makes mention of Gods promiſed preſence, or *dwelling* between the Cherubims, that he might prevail with God to ſave that City, where his Temple and this his mercy Seat was placed.] Every expreſsion in this his invocation hath ſomewhat in it proper to his ſuit, and of force to ſtrengthen his faith and dependance upon God, that he might the more ſurely prevail. In ſhort then the graces to be exerciſed *in adoration* or *calling upon*

upon God cheifly are, *Faith*, *Fear* or *Reverence* of God, and *Humility*.

I then confeſſe my ſelf to God as I ought when with hearty ſorrow and repentance (which if earneſt will be accompanied with a kind of indignation againſt my ſelf) I lay open impartially my ſins before him, not ſparing the ſweeteſt or cloſeſt: and with an humble ſenſe of my own vileneſſe, impotency and emptineſſe acknowledg my wants or his juſt judgments upon me for any of my ſins. So that the chief grace to be exerciſed peculiarly in confeſſion is repentance or Godly ſorrow, an humble and tender ſenſe of what we confeſſe, accompanied with ſhame of our ſelves.

Further, then I aske as I ought, when, as ſenſible of mine own unworthineſſe, out of an humble truſt in God, through the merits of his Son, (which truſt his gracious promiſes and declarations of good will through him, by me ever had reſpect to, do encourage me to take up)

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I heartily desire what I aske at his hands: or at least am heartily sorry, if I cannot say I heartily desire all I aske. Now because while I am asking, it so cometh to passe, that I often intermix somewhat of vow, as in asking the pardon of some past sins, many times I engage to diligent and watchfull oppolition for the future against them, therefore is it necessary that, if I would ask aright, I ask with resolution and purpose of endeavouring a new life. And further for that I cannot expect forgivenesse from God, except I forgive from my heart my brethren, therefore I must ask in charity. So then the Graces cheifly to be exercised in Petition are, First, *Faith* or an humble trust and hope in God through *Jesus Christ* that I shall speed (which is, most truly *Praying in his name*) Secondly *Love* towards God and holinesse. Thirdly, a stedfast *purpose of obedience*, which is the most considerable part of repentance. Fourthly, *Charity* towards my Brethren. Last-

Lastly, I then praise or give God thanks for his mercies as I ought, when I have an inward acknowledgement and sense that it is from him alone, and through his meer favour, that I enjoy these mercies, and when, not onely I my self do admire, but desire that heaven and earth may admire him for his goodness: when also I do all this with a resolution of improving the mercy given, that is of walking as it becometh one, who hath been vouchsafed of such a blessing. So that the graces to be exercised in thanksgiving chiefly are, 1. *Humility*, or a sense of our own unworthiness, and of Gods free mercy and grace, the onely fountain of all received or hoped for benefits. 2. *Love*, or an admiration of his goodness accompanied with a desire that he may receive all possible glory for it. 3. *Resolution* and *study* of greater and more suitable *obedience* and duty to him.

These are those graces, in the exercise

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exercise of which, the due inward manner of prayer, or a praying temper, consists: a composition so amiable, as that it will ever where it is, send up an odour of a sweet savour unto Heaven, and delight, shall I say, or overcome, the Almighty Majesty.

Chap. VIII.

Of the best outward manner of Prayer, in fit postures and fit words. Of praying by gift, and the inconveniences alledgeable against it. Of praying by a form, and the inconveniencies alledgable against it. An accommodation and reconcilement of both.

IN the outward manner of prayer the chief points considerable are, the

the use of fit postures, and meet words.

Now though the posture of the body seem to be a small matter, yet methinks my prayers wants their due solemnity, if not performed in a posture of worship. True it is, many a devout prayer a man may make riding upon his horse back, walking in the fields, and the like: and right Christian is it thus to sanctifie my necessary journies, or the time which otherwise would be wholy lost in travel, or stoln away by such recreatory obambulation. But these are occasional, and not my set and solemn devotions. Here my body being otherwise necessarily imployed, the most which I can give to God is my soul: or if to my thoughts my words be added, it is as much as well can be. But in my fixt course of devotion, it is not to be supposed that I worship God (*aliud agens*) imployed with any thing but his worship: and therefore herein let my body, as well as

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my soul, be taken up in meet acts of worship. Now that I account to be the best posture of worship, which best expresseth an inward reverence of that Majesty, to whom I address my self, who having *fearfully made* my body, and to this day *wonderfully* upheld and preserved it, and (which is infinitely more) redeemed even my very body to immortality by the body and bloud of his Son, hath obliged it, as well as my soul, to all possible homage. And it is to be observed, that St. *Paul* seems to speak (chiefly if not only) of private and his daily devotion, when he saith, *I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* What was his therefore, let it be my practice, as often as I thus pray, to bow my knees; and (if to no other end, but that I may be sure to mind, that they be *without wrath*) let me add the *lifting up of hands.* Other postures may be sometimes necessary in our solemn humiliations, or more earnest deprecations of any imminent

imminent evil; such as is *Proſtration*, or caſting my ſelf on the earth before God: to which pious diſcretion will eaſily in their ſeaſon direct. Part. II. Chap. 8.

As to matter of words or the forms of prayer, this age hath ſeen more controverſie, and that in *England* alone, than all ages from the beginning of the world have known all the world over. Touching which matter I ſay onely, that the nature of prayer being, as beforeſaid, a *ſeeking unto God by way of adoration, confeſſion, petition, and praiſe*, if we do this with honeſt hearts and ſuitable affections, whether the words in which we utter our ſelves, be our own or anothers, whether they be forethought or ſudden, (provided they fitly and reverently expreſs the inward ſenſe of our hearts) it mattereth not, nor is it at all eſſential unto *Prayer*. For the full eſſence of prayer is complete, ſuch an addreſs being made inwardly by my ſoul, and outward-

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ly thus expreſſed by my tongue and body: and be the words whoſe they will, my praying them (that is, offering them up to God) with an heart ſuitable to them, hath made them as much mine, as if I had invented, contrived, dictated or pend them at the firſt. I think therefore, if men would be ſober and peaceably minded, this need not make either a ſtirre in the World, or move any ſcruple to a Chriſtians conſcience.

I profeſs my ſelf no whit guilty of undervaluing the free effuſions of the ſoul before God (in private eſpecially) in ſuch expreſſions as the affected and moved mind ſuggeſts, or as the ſpirit gives utterance. But in my daily private devotions to uſe perpetually ſuch a looſe and arbitrary way, I think hath theſe inconveniencies. Firſt, that (by reaſon ſometimes of the coldneſs, dulneſs, and heedleſneſs of my heart; other times by reaſon of diſtractions, incumbrances, and the like almoſt unavoidable

avoidable miſchiefs) my devotions will be too often ſlightily ſlubberd over, perfunctorily and diſorderly performed: Whereas, had I a mature and well compoſed prayer before me, which I uſe wholy to offer up to God, all would be much more ſubſtantial: and though haply my heart may have been in theſe my prayers too too dead (as it was likely perhaps to have been, had I prayed otherwiſe, for ſuch or ſuch a ſeaſon) yet ſhall I not prove guilty of ſuch idleneſs, negligence, and ſlightineſs, as otherwiſe I ſhould have been. And ſuch infirmities, which are incident to us by reaſon of our preſent frailty and ſtate, God is likely the more eaſily to pitty and paſs by, when he ſees that, though we are more indiſpoſed than ordinary, yet are we no whit leſs diligent. Secondly, Another inconvenience thereby may oftentimes be, The omiſion of many things neceſſary to be confeſſed, asked, or returned thanks for; not ſo much

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through negligence, dulneſs, &c. (as before) as incogitancy and unavoidable forgetfulneſs. Our ordinary wants and ſpiritual concerns we may come not to mind, either at all, or as we ought, through much being intent on ſome other preſsing (outward) evils. Common experience will eaſily ſatisfie a Chriſtian herein, who is but verſt in the practice of what we ſpeak of. Have I not many times kneeled down before God with an intention to ask ſuch things which by reaſon of my earneſt asking ſomewhat elſe, I have forgotten to ask before I aroſe? and hath not the reaſon been the meer following extemporary ſuggeſtions? Let it it be conſidered.

Again, on the other ſide, to uſe alwaies a certain and conſtant form of words, ſeems to have theſe inconveniencies. Firſt, that we having almoſt daily new ſins to confeſs, new wants to beg a ſupply of; theſe by ſuch courſe ſhall be omitted, or only lightly

lightly and generally touch't, at least not so particularly and affectionately pressed and insisted upon as they ought. 2. Besides, sometimes haply I would spend more time in prayer than at another time: Now if my prayers be alwaies the same, I cannot, except (as Papists are reported to do their *Credoes and Ave Maries*) I should run over and over the same again. 3. Further, frequent use may breed dulness, as some may think.

These being the inconveniencies of both cases, and each case besides having advocates (or persons that love and plead for them) even amongst the common people, it will be best to move for an *Accommodation*: And that may be on this wise.

The inconveniencies of the former case may be avoided, by the having a certain good plain and full form of prayer, which we well understand, and by usually tying our selves hereto: not so as, 1. to think

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our work is done by the prayer being said; for that were to neglect the most necessary part in the manner of prayer, contrary to former rule: nor so, 2. as not to alter, for this or that time, any expression as God may move our hearts in prayer, or insert any new thing as we have need: but only so, 1. as to ensure my self that my devotions and prayers be sound and compleat, that I offer not to God the *halt and the lame*: so, 2. as to keep my mind fixt and constant to its business, intent upon all its spiritual concerns.

And again, the inconveniencies of the later case will be avoided hereby, that we have not supposed the form upon occasion altogether unalterable, as aboveſaid, but rather to have its fit and proper places, wherein we may insert or put in the confession of new sins, with their proper aggravations; as also fit places for the adding of any new matter of *Petition* or *Thanksgiving*,

as

as there ſhall be occaſion. And to the laſt inconvenience of this ſecond caſe, it may be ſaid, that Uſe cannot beget dulneſs, if the prayer thus ſuppoſed to be framed, be uſed, according to former precepts, with *Reading* and *Meditation* before it, which exerciſes will have in a good meaſure quickned the heart for prayer. And as for ſuch more ſolemn ſeaſons, when we would ſpend more time with God in prayer, we need not ſo to tie our ſelves to theſe our ordinary devotions; thoſe, which at ſuch ſeaſons we intend, being already ſuppoſed more than ordinary. We may be larger in the confeſsion of ſin, more particular in its aggravation, more earneſt for ſuch and ſuch mercies as we want, &c. according as we ſhall ſee occaſion: and either uſe the groundwork and ſubſtance of thoſe our uſual prayers, with ſuch amplifications as we ſhall judge meeteſt, or for that time, inſtead of them, uſe ſuch other prayers as we ſhall find

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beſt to ſuit with our temper and occaſions; for the preparation of which prayers directions will hereafter be given.

In the mean time for better underſtanding and comprehending the precepts given, as alſo for the ſupply of ſuch who may haply be ſcarce able to frame to themſelves ſuch a form, it may not be amiſs to ſubjoyn one for morning, and another for evening, framed according to the former rules.

Chap. IX.

A Form of Prayer made according to the former accommodation, which may be uſed in our morning Privacy.

THe Chriſtian then having read and meditated as before directed;

sted, let him reverently kneel down, lifting up his hands and eyes, but most surely his heart to Heaven, say, Part II. Chap. 9.

O Almighty and most Blessed God, Lord of heaven and earth, who makest the outgoings both of morning and evening, and by whose good hand upon me thy creature, I am awaked out of my last nights sleep, and being risen, here present my self before thee: I humbly bow to thee my knees, and therewith my heart and soul, and desire with all that is within me to adore thy blessed Majesty.

But most unworthy, and of my self most unsufficient, am I to perform unto thee any worr-

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worſhip or ſervice. What is duſt and aſhes, (and ſuch am I if I were innocent) to take upon it to ſpeak unto the Lord! But I, O God, am a guilty wretch, one whom it becommeth to ſtand a farre off, and ſhame covering my face to cry *Unclean, Unclean.* My ſoul is naturally overrun with luſts as with an univerſal Leproſie: there is no free part of me. My childhood and youth have not onely been vanity, but ſin: I have done nothing elſe therein but fulfilled the deſires of my fleſh and mind. My corruptions have onely grown with me: and my ſins ſince, become ſo much the more ſinful, by how much the more knowledge I have had of thy will, and ſtrength

strength and engagements to have performed it.

To this very day, as indeed I ever have done, I daily break thy holy Laws in thought, word and actions, by chooſing what thou haſt forbidden, and neglecting what thou haſt commanded. ***. In all my ways I moſt miſerably tranſgreſs. My very †ſleep it ſelf, O Lord, is not innocent. Nor is it thus onely in the common and more ordinary actions of my life. Thoſe few good deeds, which I do, have many, not onely † infirmities, but ſins in them: and I have need to repent

* *Here confeſs any particular or freſh ſin committed, or duty neglected, which in thy examination of thy ſelf thou haſt found.*

† *Remember in the uſe of theſe or any ſuch words to reflect in thy thoughts upon any particulars which thy conſcience tels thee, they may fitly repreſent to God touching thee.*

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of my very righteousnes [of my †* * *.] I therefore so desire to do: and am here come before thee, as thou hast commanded me, to confess my sin unto thee, with hopes, according to thy promise, that I shall find mercy. I have, O God, confessed to thee, as I am able.

Now Mercy, Mercy, let me find with thee, through Christ Jesus my Saviour. Remember that atonement, which he made by the bloud of his Cross: In those streames throughly wash away my filth: By those Wounds let me be healed; and by his Death let me atttain a blessed immortality, [* *] And send down thine holy Spirit abundantly;

*Particularly let me obtain the pardon of *

ly into mine heart, which may renew me throughout according to thine Image, healing all the naughty inclinations of my ſoul, and begetting in me an hearty love unto holineſs, and a conſtant fear of thee my God, that I may have reſpect unto all thy Commandments, and walk before thee all my dayes with a perfect heart. Quicken me alſo by the ſame thy good Spirit, to give all diligence in every duty [*and eſpecially in* * *] that I may grow in grace, and in thy favour, and daily come nearer unto ſalvation and thee. And foraſmuch as I my ſelf am unſtable as water, preſerve me by thy power through Faith, that I fall not from my integrity, nor depart wickedly from thee

Part. II. Chap. 9.

thee my God. Especially keep thy servant from his iniquity, [*or his iniquities of* * * *] and make me most watchful against all those * occasions and wiles of sin, by which I have been formerly insnared. My outward condition, during all the dayes of my pilgrimage here on earth, do thou order to thy glory and my own good: and, if it may be thy holy Will, grant that it may be so far quiet and prosperous, as that I may serve thee chearfully and without distraction.

* *Here thou maist have many private and proper reflexions: and so generally where-soever this same mark is set.*

Be gracious also, O Lord, unto thine Holy Church, and to this Church especially. Watch over us daily for good: and

and be pleased to bless and preserve the Kings Majesty, his Queen, and all the Royall Family. Grant that all Magistrates may be faithful both to thee, and to their Prince and Country in their trust: and that all Ministers, of what degree soever, may be sober, watchful, fervent and successful in thy work. Let the whole Nation, and especially this neighbourhood grow in the true knowledge and fear of thee. Visit with thy grace and blessing all my † Relations, my † Friends and † Benefactors. Forgive and reconcile both to thy self and me all mine † enemies. Comfort, relieve and in thine own good time deliver all thy servants † who are in any distress inward.

Part. II. Chap. 9.

ward or outward, and ſanctifie both to them and me all thy dealings, cauſing all things in the end to work together for good, according to thine infinite Power and Wiſdome, whereby thou over-ruleſt all events.

For which thy gracious adminiſtration of the whole courſe of nature, and the multitude of bleſſings appertaining both to this life and that which is to come, which thy providence inceſſantly heapes upon all mankind, and particularly upon me thy moſt undeſerving ſervant, for ever bleſſed be thy holy Name. Eſpecially may Heaven and Earth ever praiſe thee, for the redemption of the world by thy Son; and the knowledge of

of thee, through him, revealed in thy Word; and the mighty workings of thy Spirit thereby. And be thou pleased to accept of that praise which thy servant hereby returnes thee (as great as he can) for them all; and particularly, for this last nights refreshings, together with the comfortable restoring him to the enjoyment of day. Grant me thy special Grace, that I may spend my time to thy Glory, and may be all the day long in thy fear. Keep me that I fall into no sin, nor run into any danger. And accept thou this my morning service, and to gather me, who here devote my self to thee, through my Saviour Christ Jesus, in whose Name I further pray, as by him

Part II. Cha. 10. him taught, when I pray, to say,

Our Father, &c.

Chap. X.

A form of Prayer, made as the other, which may be used in our Evening Privacy.

IN like manner the Christian having entred his *Closet* with some such ejaculatory or short prayer, as before directed to, and having *read* and *meditated* as in the morning, may, I presume, very profitably, use, with such alteration, as his condition shall require, and his discretion direct, the ensuing Prayer.

O Most Holy and Gracious Father, the searcher of

raid

of all hearts, who seest my down-lying as well as up-rising, darkness and light being both alike to thee, who art near unto all my wayes, and espiest my thoughts while they are yet afar off. I have here set my self before thee to pay my evening homage, and desire to present both my soul and body (as is most due) a living Sacrifice to thee my God, who hast made and redeemed both.

But most unfit, O Lord, are they to be to thee presented, every part of both being naturally corrupt and abominable, and nothing in me free from the loathsome defilement of sin. My soul is desperately wicked, and all its powers perverse and bent upon evil:

My

Part. II. Cha. 10

My mind alienated from thee through the ignorance that is within me: My affections unruly and masterless: My will full of enmity to thy Law, and enslaved to the service of divers lusts and pleasures. And as to my body, in iniquity, O Lord, was I shapen, and in sin did my Mother conceive me: And ever since, have all my members been servants unto iniquity and instruments of wickedness. With my whole man have I obeyed the law of sin, and fulfilled the desires of my flesh and corrupt mind. I scarce can think of that sin, in which I have not had my hands one part of my time or other. In sin, O God, have I spent not onely my vainer age and the days of my ignorance, but

but my ripeſt years, and thoſe of fulleſt diſcretion, which I have yet attain'd to: Since the light of thy Goſpel hath ſhone into my opened eys, ſince thou haſt touched my heart with a ſenſe of that evil, which there is in ſin, ſo wicked and perverſe a ſervant have I been, that knowing my Lords will I have both neglected to do accordingly, and preſumptuouſly done contrary unto it. To the very preſent time, O Lord, how † frequently, and how † ſadly do I backſlide? What † liberty do I allow my ſelf? How † heedleſly do I converſe? I walk at a meer peradventure with thee my God. Notwithſtanding all my vows and promiſes of watchfulneſs unto obedience, this very day how

Part. II. Cha. 10.

how little hath thy fear been in my heart! and from hence comes it to pass that I have so miserably departed from thee [by * * *.] With what stripes therefore do I deserve to be beaten! And, how righteous a quarrel against me hath not onely thy Justice, but thy very Grace and Mercy!

* *Here confess any of the miscarriages of the day, which thou hast been supposed to have taken notice of in thy meditation.*

Notwithstanding, O Blessed Father, give thy poor creature leave to beseech, and let him prevail with thee, not to take that advantage against him which justly thou mayest: Rather, now thou hast borne so long, break my heart by this thy goodness, and make thy forbearance and long-suffering

ing to lead me to repentance. Vouchsafe unto me thy sanctifying Spirit: Let it fill me with an holy shame of my former wayes: And let the sense of my own unworthiness towards thee beget in me an holy indignation against my self, a passionate and constant zeal by future diligence, as far as is possible, to redeem and repair some of my lost and most sadly mis-spent time. Let my heart be never void of a stedfast purpose of serving thee in the impartial performance of every known duty, [especially of ***] and careful avoidance of every sin. [*] And having thus given to will, do thou of the same thy good plea-

Part. 17. Cha. 10.

* *Here put in any thing for which thou findest occasion.*

Part II. Cha. 10.

sure give also to do, following the preventions of thy Grace by the continual assistances thereof, so that I may proceed from one virtue unto another, perfecting holiness in thy fear, and keeping a conscience void of offence towards thee and all men.

And this my cordial purpose, and perseverance in endeavours of pleasing thee, do thou through the blood of my Saviour graciously accept, laying not to my charge any of my former sins, nor visiting upon me, either the neglects, or transgressions of my duty. At least however thou shalt here deal with thy servant, in the last day acquit him of all guilt, and, through the merits of thy Son, let him obtain remission

miſſion of his ſin, and an inheritance in thine everlaſting Kingdom. In the mean while, as to the neceſſaries of this preſent life, give thy ſervant what thou pleaſeſt, and what thou ſeeſt beſt for him, even food convenient. Thou needeſt not, O God, my ſervice, but accept my ambition of being ſerviceable unto thee, and bleſs me both with ſtrength and opportunities for it, and, if it may be thy holy will, with ſucceſs therein.

Father, I pray unto thee alſo for all men (foraſmuch as thou art a God who wouldeſt have all to be ſaved, and to come unto the knowledge of thy truth) eſpecially for all and every member and members of thy Univerſal Church,

Part. II. Cha. 10.

and for the particular Church of this the Land of my nativity: For the Kings Majesty, the Queen and the whole Royal Family, for all that are in authority, for the several Stewards of thy Mysteries the Ministers of thy Gospel, [for him in particular to whose oversight thou hast committed me] that thou wilt give unto them all, according to thy most gracious pleasure, the blessings both of this life and that which is to come, especially such measures of thy Spirit, that every shoulder may be fitted for its burden, and all amongst us may faithfully serve thee, according to their several degrees; so that this whole Land may be blessed with abundance of prosperity and peace,

peace, ſo long as the Sun and Moon endureth. Forget not peculiarly to ſhew mercy unto the relations, friends, helpers and well-wiſhers of thy ſervant: Reward, I beſeech thee, all their love; and forgive, good Lord, divert, and put an end unto all others malice or enmity. Let thine eyes be ever open upon, and the bowels of thy compaſſion be moved towards, all thy wanting and ſuffering ſervants: Support them under, and graciouſly deliver them out of all their diſtreſſes, and let the end be peace, and righteouſneſs, and bleſſedneſs for ever. Part. II. Cha. 10.

Thy ſervant will ſpeak yet once more, and praiſe thee for thine infinite love and compaſſion to that miſerable na-

Part. II. Chap. 10.

ture of which he is a partaker; in revealing to us, when we had lost or corrupted it, the knowledge of thy self, both by the light of Nature, and most clearly by thy holy Word; in sending thy Son for our redemption, in appointing the Ministry and Ordinances of thy Gospel, and pouring out thy holy Spirit, to turn us from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto the Kingdom of thy Son. O God, I particularly bless thee, for the knowledge which I have of thee in my Saviour Christ Jesus; for my share in him; for any measure of thy Grace on me vouchsafed; for the comfortable hope which through thy Sons bloud I have of pardon and eternal life; for

this

this dayes life and protection, for the with-holding [or removing] those several judgments which my sins deserve, [***] for the loading me with a multitude of most undeserved blessings [especially for ***.] Encrease upon me thy Grace evermore; and make me thankful by proving a faithful Steward of all thy mercies. Let that Eye of thine which never slumbreth nor sleepeth, which hath been open upon me this day, watch over me this night: Let nothing disturb or make me afraid. Let none of the sins of the day lye down with me, nor ever appear against me. Vouchsafe my body due re-

Part. II. Cha. 10.

* *Here praise God for any particular deliverance saying,* [*especially for* **.]

Part. II. Cha. II.

freſhment, and let my ſoul have her ſongs in the night. Keep both from all works of darkneſs: and let me be ever with thee, O Father, both here and hereafter, through thy Son my Saviour Chriſt Jeſus, in whoſe name and words I further pray,

Our Father, &c.

Chap. XI.

Some further Directions touching the uſe of theſe Prayers.

IN theſe or the like words may a devout Chriſtian, I preſume, not unfitly pour out his heart before God, morning and evening. But it is to be remembred to what end theſe

theſe formes were prepared, and the uſe of them directed to, to wit, to be a proviſion againſt raw, heedleſs, imperfect broken, confuſed, and diſorderly Prayers, of which dulneſs, diſtemper, or diſtraction may make even the devoureſt Chriſtian to be guilty, if he alwayes truſt to his extemporary faculty and readineſs. Part II. Cha. 11.

Wherefore it is not the intention of the preſent direction, to tye even every one that ſhall uſe theſe or the like formes ever to them, but onely commonly, or as his Chriſtian prudence and ſobriety ſhall judge it beſt ſuiting with his devotion and preſent temper. So then, if at any time a Chriſtian ſhall find his mind more ready and preſent than ordinary, ſo that he can ſay in Holy *David's* words, *My heart is fixed* [or, prepared] *O Lord, my heart is fixed*, and he feel a certain overflowing of affection ready to come over his ſoul, he is to eſteem this a time, when God doth as it were beſpeak ſomewhat more than ordi- Pſal. 108

Part II. Cha. II

nary; to that purpose offering, and giving him to feel already, more than ordinary assistance, and by such special moving of the waters secretly signifie, that he hath some healing benefit or refreshment then to communicate unto the soul. Wherefore let him yield himself to the leading of the Spirit, and by no means let slip that holy season of a more free and large effusion or pouring out of his soul before God: Always in the mean while remembring that he duly prepare himself by some fore going meditation, according to what hath been already in part spoken, and will hereafter be more fully considered.

And this practice, I presume, as it so far binds a man up, that his devotion shall not be loose and slighty, so it allows him (1.) such liberty as may duly exercise and improve any spiritual gifts which he conceives himself to have, and (2.) such variety as that there is no fear, that custome or treading always the

same

same tract, (I mean repeating the same words) should make him guilty of formality and deadness. Part II. Ch. II.

If there be any Objection now lying against this proposed course in our devotion, it is, as far as I can see, onely this, that it will take up too much time. But we have already supposed our practist to be such, who lives somewhat above a servile life, and therefore may spare some part of his time, which surely he cannot spend to a better purpose, or upon more beneficial employment. And it will undoubtedly be found true by him, who shall set himself upon this practice, or put his devotions into this mold, that when he is once but got into the way, and settled in it, the performance of all will cost him less time by much in a day, than hath the reading of these directions. An hour in a day (or very little more) being divided into equal parts, and half taken in the morning, half at night, may very well suffice; and they are either very full of imployment,

Part II. Cha. II.

ployment, or exceeding bad husbands of their time, who, being at their own command, cannot afford so much time for so necessary a work. (Not to speak that some part of this work may be reckoned a kind of studying, and that as becoming, as useful to all such as we speak to.) Consider man, which is of greater concernment, thy souls, or thy bodies welfare? Which is longer, threescore years and ten, or *Eternity*? Canst thou therefore onely find time to provide for the more unworthy?

PART.

PART III.

Of my more solemn Retirement into my Closet upon *Holydaies* and *Sundaies.*

Chap. I.

That our devotions should be greater on Holydaies, *than on ordinary daies. The end of* Festivals, *and their Vindication from Abuses and Cavils.*

THat upon Holydaies or Festivals, they ought to be more taken

Part III. Chap. 1.

taken up in devotion, than on other daies, there is no men I presume will deny, except they be so factious as to slight the institution, or so sensual as not to understand the end and design of them.

It is as uncharitable as unreasonable a part, to conclude, that because they bear the name ordinarily of certain Saints and Martyrs, that therefore the daies were superstitiously consecrated to the meer honour of those Saints. The design of the Church in this institution seems to me only this much.

First, that Almighty God might have particular glory for all the particular parts and degrees of the work of our redemption (the Incarnation, Circumcision, Passion, Resurrection, &c. of our Saviour) as likewise for all those his servants by whose doctrine and examples, whether in life or death, his holy Gospel hath been planted and confirmed. Then 2. that there might be due commemoration of such particular persons,

and

and of the graces in which they did excell; as well to the end, that their examples (at leaſt) might be an immortal incitement to vertue, and they being dead might yet thus ſpeak; as that vertue might have its deſerved honour, which, for the enforcement of like worthy practices upon others, comes not at all too late though it be given to the aſhes of the vertuous. Part. III Chap. I.

And that theſe two, to wit, Giving particular honour to God, and the Propagation of vertue, were the main aims of the Church, ſeems to be undeniable, if we do conſider either the particular Collects on thoſe daies, or that clauſe in the Primmer *for the Eſtate of Chriſts Church Militant*, towards the end [*We bleſs thy name for all thy ſervants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beſeeching thee to give us grace to follow their good examples*, &c.] which prayer, we know, is one part of the Service of the Church upon every Feſtival, and both this Prayer

and

Part III. Chap. I.

and the formentioned Collects expreſly profeſs as much as we affirm.

Now theſe, as they cannot be rejected by any ſober men (and ſo the end being right, and the power juſt, and the thing it ſelf as juſt (which two laſt, becauſe I ſee no reaſon for the queſtioning them, I let paſs without any other proof, than the evidence which they carry with them) it cannot be ſeen how the inſtitution ſhould be amiſs, wherefore the factious have an anſwer:) ſo they are directly fruſtrated by thoſe, who look upon Feſtivals as meerly a time of liberty, and ſo many daies devoted to pleaſure or idleneſs. I will not ſay, but that both the Church and State in ſetling their Inſtitutions by Law, might have ſome aime at allowing ſervants, and thoſe who live a ſervile life, ſome reſt and time for lawful recreations, which ſometimes the covetouſneſs of ſome Maſters, ſometimes ſome perſons own covetouſneſs

neſs would not allow them: (And this is juſtifiable even by the practiſe of God himſelf in the fourth Commandement, *that thy ſervant may reſt*, &c.) but that it was never either the Churches or States intention, that they ſhould wholy be ſpent to this purpoſe I do affirm; and for proof hereof, *at home*, alledge our Laws, which enjoyn all on ſuch daies to reſort to places of publick worſhip for the ſervice of God, and *abroad*, that Imperial Conſtitution, *We will not that Holydaies, which are conſecrate to the ſupreme Majeſty, be imployed or ſpent upon pleaſures.* And it would be a right pious work, and as much for the vindication of Feſtivals as any other, if Magiſtrates would, according as I am ſure they may, puniſh thoſe, who uſe to ſpend whole Holydaies in their pleaſures (dauncing, hunting, runnings, footballs, &c.) by the legal mulct for abſence from Divine Service.

But may no recreation then be

taken

Part. III. Chap. 1. taken upon Holydaies? I do not say, nor intend that: nor doth, I presume, the Law, neither new, or old. But the rest and (if by the rest we will understand any thing but a dull idleness) the refreshment of labouring persons, being one thing which, by the way, was designed in their institution, plain it is that lawful recreations as they are exercises of refreshment, may on them be used. But as to such recreations, which shall supplant or thrust out the service of God, which is the main end to which the Festivals were ordained, I see not how they can without sin be frequented, practised, or tolerated: I am sure our Ecclesiastical Laws tolerate them not.

Further, I presume the genuine sense of the fourth Commandement enforceth as much as I press: For that enjoyning a Jew to sanctifie the seventh day, that is the time which by their Law was set apart to the worship of God, will also (at least)

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in equity and reason enjoyn a Christian to sanctifie such times, as their Laws have consecrated to the Divine worship: which Laws touching the particular setting apart of times to the worship of God, though they are not all extant in Scripture, nor immediately delivered by the mouth of God; yet, being made by them, whom he, to whom *all power both in Heaven and Earth was given*, hath commissionated and made his delegates (to wit, his Apostles, and their successours, the governours of the Church) cannot be looked upon as altogether humane, but have a certain stamp of Divinity; according as ordinarily we interpret the commands of the Kings officers, in such things wherein they are commissionated, to be the Kings commands. Now, that Holydaies were ordained by the lawful governours of the Church, is too evident to be denied. And I should not fear to say, that some of our present Feasts were at the least observed by some of the

Apostles,

Part. III. Chap. I.

Apostles, our Saviours immediate Substitutes. How therefore can we neglect to sanctifie such times, which are thus consecrated to God, that is, not imploy them to those separate uses, to which they were appointed (which is the meaning of sanctifying, in this regard, in Scripture) without the unhallowing *holy* or *devoted* things, or without the evident breach of this Commandement.

I will add no more to this purpose, but that every one being bound to proportion his time for his devotion, according to the opportunities and leisure which he hath, and it being unlawful by the very municipal law or law of the Land (for such is the Ecclesiastical law in this case) totally to follow the work of my calling on Festivals or Holydaies, I cannot but have more leisure on them for the service of God; and therefore consequently a greater portion of it is to be spent in my devotions. Which being concluded, as most lawfully and rightfully it may

may, in general, what hath been said holds as well concerning private as publick devotions. I ought therefore to think my self bound on every Holyday to somewhat more of devotion in private, than what every day calls for.

Chap. II.

What there should be of new in our Private devotions upon Holy dates.

THE question now will be, what that is of new, which Festivals may seem properly to require of a Christian in his Closet-devotions.

To which it must be said, that as to the general substance of my devotions, it can scarce be other at any time, than what hath been already delivered, to wit, *Reading, Meditation and Prayer*. But yet each of these may be imployed a while

Part. III. Chap. 2. while upon some new specialty, or particular matter which that daies occasion and solemnity directs unto: to wit, upon the life or vertues of that particular Saint or Martyr, whose memory the day celebrates: or if the day be such, which was intended onely to praise God for some particular transaction relating to our redemption (as the *Nativity* of our Lord, his *Circumcision*, &c.) to bend my devotions hitherward. To this purpose it may be proper, besides what I read in Holy Scripture that day by my constant course, (which should not at any time, except upon evident necessity, or very considerable business be broken) to read those particular portions of Scripture, which are by the Church appointed for that day; I mean the *Epistle* and *Gospel* for the day. And these being read over with such care, as is before prescribed, to spend some time according to some rules in Meditation upon them: and then, either to my own prayers to

take

take in the Collect of the day, or to add some other petitions and praises, as my Christian discretion shall judge seasonable. To this imployment if I allot an hour (or if need so require, half an hour) besides what I ordinarily, on other daies, spend on my devotions, the work may in some good measure be done. And it cannot be thought but so much time may well be spared by reason of that leisure and rest which the Law on that day enjoyns me. Part. III. Chap. 3.

Chap. III.

An Exemplification or Practice of the former rules in Christmas day, with a fit Prayer to be added to my ordinary prayers upon that day.

NOw because all the directions given will be better understood

Part. III. Chap. 3. stood and rendered more easily practicable to the plainest, if a little exemplified, a pattern or two shall be set down of what there should be of new in our devotions on Festivals: and those so framed, as that they may serve not only for instances in this last case, but for examples of practice to those formerly given rules, touching *Reading* and *Meditating*.

Part. II. Chap. 4. & 5.

And first for such Feasts which celebrate the memory of some particular in, or step to, our redemption.

Amongst these the copy shall be in *Christmas day*. [The Epistle *Hebr.* I. v. 1. to v. 13.] Which having carefully read over, I cannot but observe (according to my first rule in Meditation) that the Holy Ghosts design is to express the glory of our Saviour, and especially his eminency above any, and all the Angels (which yet are the most glorious part of the Creation) And this glory of his is expressed to be so eminent,

Part. II. Chap. 5.

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nent, not onely in respect of his Divine nature, as he is the expres Image of his Fathers person, but also as he is God man, as having been born in our nature, *and purged our sins, he sate down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.* So that the very humane nature of our Saviour, how ever contemptible it might seem once to be, is now advanced infinitely above the *Angels*, *all the Angels being to worship the incarnate Son of God, and his Throne being established for ever.*

Now there being in all this no considerable matter of difficulty which offers its self, I have no need here to apply my second rules (touching searching into difficulties) and therefore I proceed to the third, to consider what I am the better for having read this. The substance of it I have already gathered in the practice of my first rule: that reviewing, to gain light to the particular parts, I find by the second verse my self instructed and confirmed

Part III. Cha 3. med in that point of my *faith*, the *Eternity of the second person*, or the Sons being from everlasting: For it is said *that God by his Son made the worlds*, that is (as I may probably conclude) all things that are. His Son then was before the *worlds*, that is from Eternity.

Again that admirable expression [*the brightness of the fathers glory, and express image of his person and the upholder of all things by his power*] what a glorious representation is it of the Sons *Deity*, and *being* distinct, but not separate, from his eternal father; according as the brightness of glory may be conceived as distinct from that glory of which it is the brightness, but never can be apart from that glory.

Again that following expression [*after he had by himself purged our sins, Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*] with what an heavenly emphasis doth it set out.

1. The fullness of the atonement made

made by Christ as to every faithfull person; by himself he purged our sins: and how can they not be pure before the father, whose sins his only Son by himself hath purged? Part. III. Cho. 3.

2. The transcendency of our Saviours glorifycation [*He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*] What a blessed (ὕψος or) *height* is here to express it! and how doth the very expression affect the considering mind! *he sat down at the right* &c. me thinks I could say it an hundred times over with new admiration and dissolution of soul. It secretly insinuates also, what shall be our future glory, when we shal be like unto him, and *sit down with him at the right hand of the same Majesty*. More of the same nature might be noted, but this is sufficient to exemplifie the Rules.

I proceed now to consider the Gospel which also I am supposed to have read. [Gospel, *John* I. v. 1, to 15.] The scope and substance of this Gospel seems to be this, that

Part III. Chap. 3.

our Lord Jesus being God ever with the Father, in time took upon him our nature to redeem us, and that *John the Baptist* was a witness hereof.

But here are several expressions, which seem to contain some matter of faith touching our Saviour, and yet I do not perfectly understand them. Wherefore if I have any help (as before directed to, by the second Rule touching Meditation upon Scripture) I consult that touching this whole portion of Scripture. Which having consulted, I may be supposed in some tolerable measure to understand what is held forth therein necessary to be believed. If I have no such book or help, then I must make as good shift as I can: and considering the scope and drift of the place beforementioned, and every particular expression at which I stick, I interpret that which I doubt of, with a regard to, and by the height I can take from, what I understand. Thus having the

Light

the general ſcope of this Scripture in my mind, I review it, or conſider it again in the order as it lies. Nothing do I meet with which I do not in a good meaſure underſtand till I come to v. 4, & 5. (For having obſerved at the firſt reading, that (v. 14.) the Apoſtle ſaith the *word was made fleſh*, by the *word* in the 1. verſe I can underſtand nothing but the eternal Son of God) *In him was life, and the life was the light of men.* What life? or how is the life the light of men? I conſider that the holy Ghoſt is here ſpeaking of the Deity of the Son, and in the third verſe deſcribes the making of all things to him. Then it follows *In him was life.* It is very likely that the meaning hereof is thus much, *He is the fountain of life*, he made as well the things which live, as thoſe which do not. He communicated life to all living. *And the life was the light of men.* It is very likely that life here is to be underſtood of that natural life, which all

Part. III. Cha. 3.

Part. II. Chap. 3.

men what soever live: for he speaks of Christ as the Creator of all living. Now, as hereas it is said, that this *life is the light of men*, or that that life, which men do partake of from God, is light; haply the meaning hereof may be, that the life, which the Creator gave to man, was a more light some, that is, a more intelligent life than what the rest of living creatures here below partake of; to wit, a Rational life. Now it follows; *The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.* It is very likely that by *light* I must understand in this verse, what I did thereby in the former, to wit, Reason: and so considering all more attently, at length I guess, that some such thing as this is the import of that verse.

The natural light of mans reason shone in this corrupt and sensual nature, but that Nature followed not the dictates of it: Men rejected what their reason would have guided them to choose. And this, being

that

that I was led thereto by considering the drift of the words, and find now that the words will, to my best judgment, very well bear, I conceive may probably be the meaning of this place. But here it may be very necessary to admonish (especially ordinary people) that they proceed not too far upon their own judgments in interpreting darker places of Scripture, of which this haply may seem one. We have only in what we have said shewn the best way, which can be taken for the finding out the sense of Scripture. But if so be, that using this method I particularly could not have found out so much touching the sense of this Scripture, as hath been above declared, yet had not either my reading or my meditation been fruitless. I could very well and very profitably have rested in this, that I observed these verses to testifie to me, that Christ is God, and by him all things were made: and that from him came life, and all the light, which in life

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men have. And thus much, by observation, a plain person might have found from hence. But usually plain persons will do best, not to trust the strength of their own reason, which commonly is none of the best judge of consequences and dependances, but rather get to themselves such helps as above directed to, and follow their wholsome guidance

Well: having found out as I conceive thus much of the meaning of this Scripture, if there be any thing else I doubt of in that part of it which remains I proceed to consider it, carrying still in my mind the scope of the whole, and thus much as I have learnt of the sense of the former part. The substance of the remaining part seems to me thus much, That when it pleased the *Word to be made flesh* (that is, the Son of God to take upon him our nature, and in that nature to dwel) *John the Baptist* was sent for a witness to testifie, that this was the *true light*,

true light, to the end that *men* might believe: And to as many of mankind as did believe upon, and receive this light, this light (himself being the eternal and natural Son of God) gave the priviledge, right or power to become through him the Sons of God, being now born unto a new (*viz.* a godly) life by their receiving him. Now here it may be (as I look through the particular verses) are one or two things more of moment which I doubt of, and touching which I will consult the best helps I have, or otherwise consider with as much attention and modesty as I can.

First, in what sense should Christ be termed the *true light?*

This considering of, I remember that before, there was mention of a certain *light* which all men did partake from the *Word* as created by him (to wit, their Reason) and this light, though it shone in them, yet (as the first man did not follow its shine so) the rest did reject its guidance

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dance, and the *darkneſs received*, or *comprehended it not*. But now it is ſaid, *that the word*, that is, *Chriſt made fleſh*, is *the true light*: both which conſidering together, the import of all ſeems to be this, That whereas the natural light of reaſon, being not comprehended (but rather overcome) by the darkneſs of mans corrupt nature, was inſufficient, of it ſelf, to lead man unto his ſalvation or true happineſs, and, being ſophiſticated by the ſame corruption, had led him to ſeek happineſs in many falſe and by paths, Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to bring to light the true way to happineſs, and ſo was the *true light*.

From whence alſo I begin to ſee ſomewhat into the ſecond paſſage which I doubted of, to wit, what ſhould be the meaning of that [*as many as received him*]. For, conſidering how the Evangeliſt in the verſes immediately foregoing ſpeaks of Chriſt, to wit, as the *true light*, I eaſily ſee, that to receive him is to embrace

embrace him as the light, and so to apply my self to those holy waies, which he hath discovered, alone to lead unto happiness. Which also the following words further intimate: [*them that believe in his name*] that is them, who by their imbracing the discovery, which he hath made, and doing accordingly, do manifest that they are perswaded he is the true light: which thing they do not as they are born by *the will of man*, of flesh and bloud (for the *darkness comprehendeth not the light*) but as begotten, or created over again by God hereto. Part III. Chap. 3.

So then, now I conceive I understand the *Gospel for this day*, and all the most concerning particulars in it. The substance of it therefore I recollect after this my search, to the end it may sink the deeper into me, and I be the better versed hereafter in this Scripture. And that is this. That Christ, being eternally God, was also with God (with whom he ever was) the Creator of all things, and

Part III. Cha. 3. and particularly of man: that man in his creation received a certain light (*viz.* his reason) which he opposed and overcame, rather than followed: that therefore it pleased Christ to be made man, and coming into the world, to discover the true way to happiness unto degenerate man, and as many of mankind, who embraced this discovery, and manifested their belief of Christs being the *true light*, by their receiving him as such, he restored into the blessed state of being the Sons of God (as *Adam* was before his fall). And of all this *John the Baptist* was sent before to be a witness, that by his testimony men might be prepared to believe in this *true light*.

Luke 3. 38.

Thus much then I am improved in point of knowledge. But is there nothing which may be further useful to me as to practicals? No promise of mercy? No threat of punishment to any? Nothing to quicken me to my duty? There is surely.

First,

First, that is a remarkable expreſſion, *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the ſons of God.* I cannot expect ever to be by my incarnate Lord, made a Son of God, and Heir with him in the Kingdome of his Father, except I receive him as the *true* light, except I look for happineſs by the method by him delivered, a holy Chriſtian practice according to his Goſpel. I ſee therefore hence the neceſſity of being conformable to all the Commands of the Goſpel. He is ſalvation to none to whom he is not light. If therefore I am not faithful, meek, charitable, holy, *&c.* as the Goſpel directs, ſalvation it ſelf will not ſave me.

Further, both the Epiſtle and Goſpel put me in mind of, what the day celebrates, the Incarnation of our Saviour (at leaſt his viſible Incarnation, for to the eye he was not incarnate till born.) *The Word was made fleſh*, and ſo himſelf ſpake unto us, *and by himſelf he*

purged

Part. III. Chap. 3. *purged our sins. The Word*, who was that? *The Son of God, the brightness of his Fathers glory, the express Image of his Person, he who was ever with God, and ever God, heir of all things, by whom all things were made, he was made flesh. O the depth of the love of God and Christ!* Whose soul can well hold to contemplate it!

Besides this admiration and dissolution of soul, the thoughts hereof cannot but be thus further useful to me.

First, seeing, from what an infinite glory, to what a mean nature and condition, the Son of God (himself the infinite God) stooped for the help and saving of men, I cannot but see my self in duty bound to the like humility, meekness and condescension, not to stand upon mine own petty interests, and consult nothing but self, when I have opportunity to do good to any inferiour, that wants my succour. Had Christ done so, he had never been made

made flesh for me. Now *let the same mind be in me which was also in Christ Jesus.* Part. III. Chap. 3.

And again, seeing to what an height of excellency the nature of mankind is now advanced, it should prevail with me to put a due price upon it, and never willingly to dishonour, by any unworthy action, what God himself hath so honoured. Did God stoop to vindicate my nature from the contempt and tyranny of the devil, and shall I, notwithstanding all the condescensions of his grace, still wilfully enslave and destroy my self.

Further, God having united the nature, of which I am a partner, to him, I should be ambitious of all meanes of uniting my self to him, that is, of doing all that may be on my part to further this union.

And especially, the thoughts hereof should quicken me this day to a zealous participating his body and bloud. Can I consider God made flesh for me, God debasing himself

Part. III. Chap. 3. himself to be one with me, and is it possible that I can neglect, what is so much for my honour and interest, as the means of sealing my particular union with him? How can I esteem my self duly to have celebrated the memory of his being made flesh, if having means of partaking of that flesh, which he took, I neglect it? And how much of ingratitude must such neglect have in it?

Lastly, seeing that one great end of our Saviours being incarnate was, to be the true light to man in the pursuit of his happiness, let me account it a noble degree of assimilation or being like my Saviour, if I can in any measure be a light to any herein. And if God have by office made me such, let me prize and honour my imployment, and manifest my value of it by my diligence in it. The more light I give, the nearer do I in my office come unto my Saviour.

Thus much then of incitement have I hence to my duty. My other rules

rules are not here so applicable: Wherefore in the conclusion of my Meditations I consider what of new all that I have meditated, doth suggest unto this dayes prayers: And that I shall find { Praise. / Petition. } to be matter of

Part. III. Chap. 3.

See Part. II. ch. 5.

As to the first,

1. The infinite goodness of God, that he would at all think of restoring that nature, which was now an enemy to him, having wilfully fallen from him, cannot, if duly considered, but melt my heart into thankful praise of him.

2. That (yet) greater commendation of his goodness, his infinite condescension, his redeeming our nature in a way so glorious to it, as was the assumption of it unto his own nature, methinks should overcome my soul, and wrap it into an extasie of praise and admiration. In all likelihood, infinite Wisdome might have thought of a course, which would have been less honourable to man, and would not

so

Part. III Chap. 3.

so much (if *I* may so speak) have humbled the Deity. But he would not bring us to glory ingloriously. The meer consideration therefore of the honour, which our Lords Incarnation puts upon our ill deserving nature, will not suffer me to be silent this day in his praises.

And as to matter of petition, surely it cannot but be right seasonable to beseech, 1. That all this may not be in vain unto me: And 2. That to that end, *I* may transcribe these Copies of goodness, humility, and purity, which shone in our Saviours incarnation, and walk in the light, as well of his example, as doctrine. And all this *I* may do in some such words as these.

A Prayer to be added to my other daily Prayers, on Christmas-day.

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who, out

out of thy meer goodness and pitty, having promised thy Son to redeem fain mankind, didst in the fulness of time faithfully performe with thine hand what thou hadst spoken with thy mouth, and send him into the world made, and about this time born, of a woman; I one of that redeemed, though vile, nature, humbly adore this thy Grace and faithfulness. Eternity, Lord, is too little to bless thee for it: But Eternal praise is the greatest that I can wish thee: and maist thou to eternity receive due glory for this thine infinite Goodness and Mercy!

O Thou the onely begotten Son, *by whom* thine eternal Father made the Worlds, who wast ever with God, and ever God,

Part. III Chap. 3.

God, the brightneſs of his Glory, and expreſs Image of his Perſon, yet waſt pleaſed in time to be made fleſh, and pitch thy Tabernacle in our nature: I part of the purchaſe of thy bloud, poor duſt and aſhes, but ſuch as thine infinite Glory was pleaſed for my ſake once to wear, and now to glorifie, and ſet above Angels, moſt humbly bleſs thee, as well for this thy condeſcenſion as for the honour done to man. *Thou tookeſt not upon thee the nature of Angels, but the ſeed of* Abraham *thou did'ſt take.* Even ſo, O Saviour, for ſo it hath ſeemed good to thee, Thou thoughteſt not the Angelical nature low enough for thine Infinity to ſtoop to. Moſt dear Jeſus! thou haſt overcome

come me. I would praise thee, but I cannot further. Accept my silent ravishment, admiration, and faith. *I believe. Lord, help my unbelief.*

O holy Spirit, the power of the most High; who, after an unconceiveable sort, overshadowing the Virgin Mother, did'st frame in her sacred Womb that Holy Thing which * was called the Son of God; For this thy most wonderful and fearful (but to man most happy) operation, I unworthy man bless thee: beseeching thee to inspire my heart, that I may from this blessed Copy transcribe these Virtues of Goodness, Humility, Love, Purity,

* *That is, was the Son of God. For in Scripture many times being called and being, word and thing are one and the same.*

Part. II. Chap. IV.

Purity; and what ever mine holy Saviour, either by his Life or Doctrine hath taught me: that so, I walking in his light, he may be to me life everlasting, to the praise of thee, O Father, Son, and holy Spirit, one undivided God, Eternally. *Amen.*

Chap. IV.

An Exemplification of the former Rules in St. Stephen's way: With a Prayer which may be used on St. Stephen's day.

FOr the Epistle, I use to read to the end. Which having read, I find to be a narrative or relation of St. Stephen's martyrdom. And the chief substantials, that my thoughts

thoughts fix upon, are, That Encouraging vision vouchsafed to him, in his entrance upon his suffering, and the manner of his taking his suffering. Part III. Ch. 4.

St. *Stephen*, the first of those, who were to pass to Heaven in the fiery Chariot of a violent death, for the witness of Jesus, was now as good as sentenced: for the defence, which he had made, had onely further incensed his persecutors. But he, who should take first so bold a step, had need of some more than ordinary encouragement. It pleased therefore him, whose Witness he was, to command away the Clouds, and through the opened Heavens to shew himself standing at the right hand of God, ready to receive him thither. And seeing the passage now so clear, and the end so glorious, it was not likely that good *Stephen* should stumble at a stone or two. *This method doth the gracious providence of God observe, that where he gives a bitterer cup, there he secretly*

provides

Par. III. Chap. 9. *provides greater encouragements*, and thereby raiseth the strength of his suffering servants.

Answerable to his encouragement do I find St. *Stephens* carriage. For being cast out of the City, and stoned, all is so far from daunting him, that it scarce seems to have disturbed him, for he readily prayes to his Saviour both in his own and his murtherers behalf. Particularly, these Virtues I cannot but observe lively shining in him suffering.

1. Constancy, Resolution and Christian Magnanimity in those sufferings, which a truly Christian cause engaged him in. 2. Notwithstanding all his extraordinary assurances of glory (Christ witnessing it to him from Heaven in that blessed Vision) perseverance in earnest prayer to the last. When the stones now struck him, he called upon God and said, &c. 3. Quietness, patience and serenity: The injustice of his sufferings exasperates not

not his Spirit, nor puts him into any passion or indisposition for his duty 4. Meekness, Charity, Forgiveness, even towards them, who in that they were enemies to him, were enemies also to Christ. He *kneeled down* [An expression of the solemnity of his Prayers] *and cried with a loud voice* [an expression of the earnestness and fervour of them.] A pattern most worthy imitation in suffering. Part. III. Chap. 4.

A double benefit then the substance of this portion of Scripture (recollected according to direction) yields to me. The first, an Antidote or Remedy against dejection under, and slavish fear of suffering. If God at any time call me to the bearing a greater weight of afflictions than ordinary, let not me basely or sinfully decline them, but rather remember what St. *Stephen* (and indeed all the Children of God have) found by experience, that strength shall be given in proportionably, and that suitable to my misery Part. II. Chap. 5.

Part. II. Cha 4

fery ſhall comfort and refreſhment come in to ſuſtain my ſpirit, if I nobly engage. Secondly, St. *Stephen*'s example is to me a copy how I ought to ſuffer. Hence ſhould I tranſcribe, Conſtancy, Dutifulneſs, Patience, Charity, and what ever other Virtues I can obſerve him to have exerciſed in his ſufferings.

Now as to particular expreſſions here, that which concludes the relation cannot well paſs without notice. *And when he had ſaid this, he fell aſleep*: In ſweetneſs and love he breathed out his ſoul; and he doing ſo, pitty it was, but that to ſo ſweet a ſoul, death it ſelf ſhould be ſweetned, and ſo it was: *He fell aſleep*. It teacheth me how I am to look on death. To all men death is but a ſleep: good or bad, they muſt awake from it. But a good mans death ſhould be looked upon onely as a falling aſleep, or as another Scripture ſaith, *Reſting from his labours*: Death is much the eaſieſt to good men

Of

Of these notes or remarks which I have thus in my Meditations on this Reading made, those which I have mind chiefly to fasten upon my self (though I would not forget any) are these, which follow; of which therefore I register in my Memorial some hints, perhaps so as follows.

"St. *Stephen's day*, 1664.
"*Acts* 7.

"*Vers.* 54, 55. God ever pro-
"portions his Servants comforts
"to their sufferings.

"*Verse* 60. *He fell asleep.* How
"sweetly do good men dye! Also,
"a fit Petition to use when I pray
"for enemies; *Lord lay not this sin*
"*to their charge.*

"I noted all along in St. *Stephen*
"these Christian Graces. 1. Con-
"stancy and Courage. 2. Perse-
"verance in Prayer, notwithstand-
"ing the immediate revelation of
"his instant Glory. 3. Patience.
"4. Charity and Forgiveness.

This Pattern will serve for direction

Part III Cha. 4.

ction in what we ordinarily intend; and it is brief, because it is supposed a pattern to be followed in what we in daily course observe or set down. But if on Holy dayes any have a mind to be larger in their setting down their Meditations, this hinders not.

The Gospel, *Matt.* 23. *v.* 34. to the end.

Observing the scope of this Scripture, I find it to be a Prophecy of the dismal calamity which should befal the *Jews*, by reason of their wilful rejecting the Gospel; and cutting off them who were sent to preach it; according as their stubborn forefathers had cut off the Prophets. A judgment should befall them, which should be in some measure a proportionable revenge of all the righteous bloud which had been *shed, from Abel to Zacharv*: and this by reason that they did persist in shedding such righteous bloud, as they indeed did in the case of our Saviour, and his perse-

Ver. 35.

cuted

cuted followers. Their City therefore should become a desolation, and the very worship of God being laid wast, they should expect the Messiah so long, that they should even bless him that could tell them any thing of him. Part. III. Cha. 4. Ver. 38.

This is the general substance of this Scripture. Difficulty in it I find none to stop me: I proceed therefore to inquire what of advantage I can make by the reading of it, according to my proposed course. And, 1. I find my self, by the observing the two first verses of it, much satisfied touching one case, in which I have many times thought God to deal very hardly, to wit, touching his visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children. *Verse* 35. It is said, that upon that generation should fall *all the righteous blood spilt from Abel to Zachary*, which, at the first look, seems very severe. But the reason is rendred, *ver.* 34. because, of *the Prophets, wise men and scribes, which Christ sent amongst*

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them, some they would kill and crucifie, some scourge in their Synagogues, others persecute from City to City, according as their forefathers ever had served the Prophets: Which gives me ground to conclude, *That children seldome or never inherit their fathers punishments, or the wrath due to their fathers sins, but where they first prove inheritors of those sins*: And in this case, because they have seen their fathers sins, and the punishments, which have befallen them for them, and yet not mended by their examples, it is but justice, that their fathers sins should be visited upon them, that they should have the same or like punishments as their fathers had, and greater.

Then, 2. I cannot but note how slowly and unwillingly God comes to judgment. Thus much those words, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*, suggest to me. Our Saviour, I see, cannot foretell this desertion and rejection of the *Jews* without a lamentable taken up, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem.*

salem. So unwilling is he to punish that he even weeps at the very thoughts of it. [This is a very affecting consideration, and of special force to quicken me to repentance, and is therefore to be noted to that purpose.] Part. III. Cha. 4.

Lastly, Examining further according to the rules proposed, whether there be no instance of Gods judgments against sinners, no threat to deterre me from any sin, or the like, I find there is, and cannot but stay my thoughts a while upon this heavy denunciation of woe against those, who were outwardly Gods own people, for their rejecting the offers of grace, and upon foolish prejudices not acknowledging, or not being willing to see the light, which yet they could not but see. *And if God spared not the natural branches, how much less will he spare me, who am onely grafted in out of the wild olive, if I be guilty of the same sin?* It concernes me therefore in this case to look into my self: the

Part. III. Cha. 4.

very reading of this Scripture ought to be to me a warning And let me see: Am I not guilty of the like resisting light and rejecting grace? What do I else when I sin presumptuously, and onely not *wilfully?* Do not I then shut mine eyes against the light, and offer violence to the convictions, which come from those Scriptures, whose Authors, the *Jews*, were rejected, for offering violence unto? They rejected their living testimony, I not onely that (for that I have in the Scripture) but the very voice of their bloud, by which they sealed the truth of their testimony. Oh sinful and ungracious wretch!

Now if any such as this be my case, let my meditations here rest a while. Let me consider whether in this Scripture, which hath thus convinced me of sin, there be not somewhat which may reclaim me. And truly there is. 1. (That which hath already been mentioned) Gods unwillingness to punish, his patience

patience and forbearance. And hath not this been great towards me? How often have the warm offers of love and pardon invited me, as they did them! May not I say, God would have many a time *gathered me under his wings*? And do not these very warnings, that if *I* am not reclaimed, *I* must be forsaken, speak Gods present unwillingness (if any thing will work) to forsake me? Is not this as much as an *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*? Again, 2. I here see, that though God bore long with his people, he would not bear always, being that they did persist in resistance of his Grace. And truly *I* know not how soon God may call home from me his opposed Spirit, and, suffering his Grace no longer to be abused, leave me as he did the *Jews*, in my own stubbornness and wilfulness to perish.

Part II. Cha. 4.

After this sort may *I* employ my whole thoughts: and if time will suffer, thus ought *I* so long to medi-

His, late;

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tate, till my moved heart have taken up full resolutions of following the guidance of Gods Spirit, and yielding to his Grace. And these warnings or convictions from the Word, together with my resolutions upon them, should *I* (if able, register in that other of my Books, which *I* call my *Accomptal*, or if not) take such solemn notice of, that *I* forget not. But if any necessary matter force me to depart my privacy, before my meditations arive at such a ripeness, yet let me not fail to take notice of the warning which *I* received and set it down in my Accomptal, that so upon my * fasting day, when *I* review the actions of that week, *I* may be sure not to forget it, but to humble my self for my former miscarriages, and consider for the future, how *I* may turn my feet into new wayes.

But to return to the devotions of this present day: So much onely remains now to compleat my present meditations as to consider, what

what of new from all will be seasonable to be added to my accustomed Prayers. And here will be, Part III. Cha. 4.

First, Matter of confession touching my resisting Grace and not walking according to the light which I have had.

Secondly, Matter of praise,

1. For these warnings, which are so many calls to repentance, and invitations to happiness.

2. For the testimony which the Gospel received, and doth to this day receive, by the doctrine and death of St. *Stephen*, and for the constancy, faithfulness, patience, charity and meekness which shone forth in him.

Thirdly, Matter of Petition.

1. For grace, that I may from henceforth yield unto all motions of Gods holy Spirit. 2. That when ever God shal call me to suffer (as he doth frequently by the crosses, oppositions, frustrations, *&c.* which I meet with in the course of my life) I may manifest the like meekness, patience,

charity,

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charity, holy resolution and mindfulness of God by prayer and all other seasonable duties. All which, having considered how I may in some sober and orderly way express or represent before God, let me either insert in my wonted prayers, or in some short prayer to be added to them comprise as well as I can. A pattern whereof very particular it will not be so expedient to set down here, but rather so to frame a Prayer with some respect to the foregoing heads, as that it may in general be accommodated to, or used upon the Feasts of any Saints or Martyrs.

A

A short Prayer which may be added to our ordinary prayers upon the feast of any Saint or Martyr by our Church appointed to be kept.

O Lord, the God of truth and holiness, who at sundry times, and in sundry waies hast revealed thy self unto the world, by thy holy Prophets of old, and in these last daies by thy Son, of whom thou hast since in all ages raised up thy Saints and Servants to be witnesses, I humbly bless thee, as for all the revelations of thy will & confirmations of thy truth, so especially for the testimony given thereunto by the life

Part. III. Chap. 4. St. S.

life [(a) doctrine] [and (b) death] of thy ſervant whom thou madeſt unto the world not onely a witneſs of thy truth, but a pattern of holineſs: and I beſeech thee to pardon both all my oppoſing, and all my holding in unrighteouſneſs thoſe truths, which either he or any other of thy ſervants have preached, or left on record. I acknowledge and bewaile my guiltineſs herein: Keep me, bleſſed Father for the future (at leaſt) from all ſuch preſumptuous ſins; and grant that the ſame Spirit reſting upon me, which dwelt upon them, may beget

In

(a) *The word doctrine is chiefly to be uſed upon the feaſts of the bleſſed Apoſtles.*

(b) *If the feaſt be not the memorial of a Martyr, the word* death *is to be left out.*

in me the like humility, charity, [**] diligence, resolution, and perseverance in all holiness. Let me as they both in life and death glorifie thee, according to my measure; so that amongst those heavenly Hosts and blessed Society of thy Servants, I may have some (though it should be the lowest) place, eternally to praise and enjoy thee *O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one most glorious God*, Amen.

* *Here insert the mention of any Christian virtue, in which thou hast observed the Saint whose memory thou celebrateſt to extell.*

Chap.

Chap. V.

Of what remains to compleat my private Festival-devotions, to wit, Almes-giving.

SOme time, besides what my ordinary course requires, being thus spent in Reading, Meditation, and Prayer, suitable to the particular regard of the day, it onely remaines to compleat my devotions, that according as God hath blessed me I set apart somewhat for the poor; for it is not certainly my self or my rich neighbours onely, which I am to feast upon Holydaies: and however it may be I cannot give in my closet, yet I may in my closet, and at the end of my devotions most conveniently, cheerfully, and religiously (and it may be most liberally) consecrate, what I can spare, to such pious use, by separating,

ting it from the reſt, which I reſerve for ordinary uſes. And ſomewhat every Holyday would I caſt to have thus to conſecrate to God, though it were the leſs: By the obſerving this courſe I ſhall commonly, if not alwaies, have wherewithall to relieve the wants of ſuch, whom I meet with and find to be truly indigent; which, if I do not uſe my ſelf to ſome ſuch method, I may haply many times want a ſtock for. Whether to diſtribute it in money, or in that which is bought with my money, may be more ſuitable to the wants of thoſe whom I relieve, a little Chriſtian diſcretion will eaſily direct. And the more to enforce this practice, let me conſider how naked, miſerable and ſtingy ſolemn thankſgiving is, without ſomewhat of Almes-giving. Then ſurely I rejoyce in a way moſt becoming the mercies I and mankind have received, when as many as I have wherewithall coveniently to help, have cauſe to rejoyce for my rejoycing: Part III. Chap. 5.

Part. III Chap. 5.

rejoycing: and on the contrary, if being able (by doing but what is my duty, at least what I well may) to revive poor and disconsolate persons, I suffer them through my close-handedness) to groan under their distresses upon daies of publick joy, what a blemish is it to those daies joy, and what want of Christian goodness and charity doth it bespeak in me? I should rather be greedy and ambitious to make all the world rejoyce with me.

Now, for the making at least thus much of Almesgiving an act of my private devotion, no one will presume to be disatisfied, who either considers the premises and the nature of the thing, or what our Saviour saith touching this matter, *Let not thy right hand know what* in this case *thy left hand doth.* Let therefore, I say, my charity crown my devotions: and as I put out that (whatsoever it is) which I have to devote unto God, for the relief of his wanting servants, it will not be amiss

Mat. 6 3.

amiss to use some short ejaculation directed unto his allseeing Majesty, by which I may express my chearful offering it unto him, that is my setting it apart for the poor, whom he hath commanded me to succour, and promised me a *blessing* if I consider. Now that may be done in some such words as these. Part. III. Chap 5. Psa. 41. 1

O Lord, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof, I offer unto thee (what, by thy gift and blessing, I have) this small testimony of my thankfulness and duty, to be bestowed upon those wanting ones whom thy providence shall give me opportunity to relieve. Be thou pleased through the bloud of my Saviour to accept it, and pardon all my vain expences.

The using some such course as this

Part. III. Chap. 5.

this proposed will make me more liberal in these my acts of charity: for how can I offer niggardly to this my bountiful God, when I am conscious to my self, I have somewhat considerable, if I will well husband all, which I may devote to him, & yet not abridge my self or mine either of necessaries or conveniencies: and hereto I shall be the more quickned if I remember I offer to God, who both gave me, and sees all I have. Now whether I may upon such a day meet with opportunity to my mind, or such a person to bestow it on, as the discretion of my charity could wish, or whether I cannot; yet let me account it really given to God, and therefore separate it from the rest of the store, so that ever after I may look upon it as devote, and not to be touched, except to distribute it to the poor. But if any fatal necessity should constrain the meddling with any part of ought thus separated, let me religiously observe to return it again to the poor

poor mans purse or stock, with an expiatory usury; that is, with somewhat more, which may make recompence for my first diminishing it. And thus we will leave the private devotions of Festivals, and consider, in the next place, what will be meet to be performed on the Lords day. Part. III. Cha. 6.

Chap. VI.

That the Lords day ought to be kept holy, and what that means.

TOuching the observation of the Lords day, though I judge them indiscreet friends unto it, who referre the institution of it mainly to the fourth Commandement, yet I put the keeping of it holy so far out of all question, that I cannot but account him very unchristian, who either is slightly herein himself, or goes

Part. III. Chap. 6.

goes about to poſſeſs others that they may be ſo without ſin.

The true grounds of ſanctifying the Lords day ſummed up. 1 Cor. 16 1, 2.

The 1. naturall juſtice of the thing, that there ſhould be ſome time ſet apart amongſt the Chriſtian community for the publick and ſolemn worſhip of God; 2. The antiquity and authority of that Apoſtolick canon (recorded partly in expreſs terms in Scripture, and if it were not ſufficiently manifeſt by their practice) which hath ſet apart this time, 3. Our Saviours honouring this day with his reſurrection thereupon (which gave occaſion to its being ſet apart) 4. The cuſtom of all Chriſtian Churches through all ages, and from the very Apoſtles daies. 5. Nay the practice of our Lord himſelf on this day meeting his aſſembled Diſciples, are all of them arguments beyond contradiction, and *warrant* (ſufficiently) divine, that it is to be eſteemed conſecrate or ſet apart to the worſhip of God. And then the force which the fourth Commandement in equity bears, that

that what time is ſet apart or conſecrated to God ſhould be ſanctified, that is ſpent to thoſe ſeparate purpoſes and intents, for which it was ſet apart (which I ſay is the meaning of ſanctifying or keeping holy any time) ſufficiently and beyond all evaſion enjoyns its being kept holy, it being ſuppoſed once to be ſet apart, as it is before proved to have been. And certainly (if as is undeniable, it be the duty of every Chriſtian, as much as may be, to keep all his life as a perpetual Sabbatiſm or holy reſt unto God) it muſt needs be an argument of a very profane, worldly, and unchriſtian ſpirit, not to afford God this day free from ſenſual pleaſures, and worldly cares or labours. Wherefore, I ſay, the keeping holy of the Lords day, I put out of all queſtion, and would have no man flatter himſelf, that he is a devout Chriſtian, who uſeth either by idleneſs or pleaſures, or unneceſſary worldly buſineſs to profane what (the Church,

Part. III Chap. 6.

Hebr. 4. 10.

Part. III. Cha. 6

Church, and being that the Church hath done it, by good warrant and power transmitted to her by Christ) God himself hath allowed. Profanation I call it: for if the spending it to holy purposes be to sanctifie it, then the spending it contrarily upon ordinary or unworthy practices, is to profane it. And if we may not *give that which is holy unto dogs*, it is then surely most intolerable to take that time, which by divine Law ought to be holy unto God, and give it to his enemies, the devil, this world, and our own lusts, which we do when we spend the Lords day either in idleness, pleasures, or needless worldly matters.

Works of charity or mercy are acts of holiness: and works of necessity, so far forth as they are works of necessity, are acts of mercy, and consequently the doing of either of these (that is, works of *Charity* or *Necessity*) when due occasion calls me thereto, is rather sanctifying than unhallowing the Lords day) (especially

(especially if I do them out of duty towards God, and in his fear) and for this I have his warrant, who tels me that he better accepts *Mercy than Sacrifice.* Part. III. Cha. 7. Mat. 9. 13.

Chap. VII.

Of Preparation for the Lords day. A Preparatory Prayer thereto.

SEeing then that the Lords day is to be kept holy, that is, to be spent in the worship and service of God, for which it is set apart, it concerns me to consider how I may spend it in a way most complying with this its design or intendment. And I shall easily, upon the very consideration of the nature of Gods worship, be convinced, that it is in a manner impossible for me duely to sanctifie it, if I come unto it hot and wreaking from my worldly busi-

Part III. Cha. 7.

nesse. For being I am to worship God in spirit and in truth, with all my mind, soul and strength, and in a word with my whole man, evident it is that I am unable so to do, while my heart yet remains unemptied of the world: and being unfit to worship God, I am not, while so, in a due state to sanctifie this day. Wherefore the right sanctification of the Lords day is to begin with Preparation.

And it is a right wholsome institution, that upon the Evening before it, there should be Prayers in every Parish Church, which is grown now too much into disuse by reason onely (that I can imagine) of the degeneracy of the age. If there be such custome kept up in my Parish, I would not, but upon necessity, be absent from those preparatory prayers: At which, though I should be supposed to have been present, yet would I not content my self therewith: but, whether I have been imployed publickly in preparations

parations or not, in my course of devotion, on Saturday night, take so much more time than I do ordinarily, as might serve for some preparatory Meditations and Prayers.

The least which I can do to this purpose in my Meditations, is, First, To examine whether there be not some sin or sad miscarriage of the week past, which lies unrepented of, and so may blast my next daies performances. And if any there be, secondly, to consider of it more particularly, its aggravations, its nature, whether it be not such an one, part of the *Repentance*, for which must be *Reconciliation*, *Restitution*, or somewhat like: and accordingly to apply my self to what *I* in my conscience, and in the fear of God do judge due repentance. Thirdly, to endeavour the emptying my head of worldly (at least distracting) cares; to bid them be gone now, till a day for them return: And lastly, so to contrive (as neer as *I* can) all my

Part. III. Cha. 7.

affairs for the next day, that both *I* and my family may have as little avocations, or matters to call away our minds from holy duties as may be. This by way of Meditation.

My Prayers must be suitable to my condition. If any such sin, as before mentioned, be found, that must be confessed, bewailed, and pardon craved, together with grace for the future against it: which may be done by putting in the mention of that sin in the proper *space* left for such purpose. But besides this, it will be necessary to add, some particular petitions for due preparation or disposition of heart for the duties of the next day. First, for a quiet, setled, and composed mind, so that *I* may attend, with all my soul, my holy concerns or business. Secondly, for enlivened affections, that *I* may not be dull and heartless, but of a tender and melting spirit. Thirdly, for a pliable ductile yielding and easie mind, that *I* may mix the word with faith,

faith, and render the obedience of faith. Lastly, because both my own and the Congregations benefit and edification much depends upon the Ministers due and affectionate discharge of his office, it is therefore fit I forget not him, but commend him to the assistance of the Spirit. To which purpose the following prayer may be either inserted in some fit place towards the end of my prayers or added to them. Part. III. Cha. 7.

O Lord from whom the preparations of the heart are: The day now approacheth which, being holy unto thee, I am to spend in thy more solemn worship. Many sins there are by me not duely repented of; which may justly bring upon me a curse instead of a blessing. [Especially

Part III. Chap. 7.

cially my [***] may make my very prayers an abomination to thee]. But accept thou I beseech thee of this my confession of them, and (at least desired) sorrow for them. Turn my heart from them for the future; and through the bloud of my Saviour so remove the guilt of them, that they may not hinder good things from me. Let the effusions of thy grace both upon me and all the Congregations of thy people be plentifull. Let my heart be fixed, and none either vain or worldly thoughts lodge within me this night. Quicken me by thy Holy Spirit, that I may draw neer unto thee with

* *Here insert the mention of such particular sinnes which thou hast found thy self guilty of, &c.*

with a true heart, and be fervent in Spirit in thy ſervice; and with a good and honeſt heart receiving thy word, may underſtand and keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience and unto perfection. Remember thou thy ſervants who are to diſpenſe thy Myſteries unto thy people: and eſpecially him upon whoſe teaching I am to wait. Pardon their ſins and frailties; Open their mouths, guide their minds and tongues, that they may deliver thy truths in the demonſtration of thy Spirit: and let thy work ſo proſper in their hands, that both themſelves and others may be built up in our moſt holy faith, to the perfecting thy Church, and the eternal glory of thy

Part. III. Cha. 8. name thereby, through our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus. *Amen.*

Chap. VIII.

Of the true manner of sanctifying the Lords day.

Sect. 1.

Generally before I go to Church.

NOw as to my Closet duties upon this day, least the sole consideration of them should breed any neglect, forgetfulness, or disturbance of the duties to be performed in the family, and in the publick assembly, it will be most expedient to consider the whole duties of that day, both publick, private and secret, and set down each in their natural order.

First then, as upon no day we suppose

ſuppoſe our Chriſtian to be ſloth-full, ſo leaſt of all upon the Lords day, but to be up in a convenient ſeaſon, both himſelf, and, if any are under his charge, to ſee that they are ſo to. A convenient ſeaſon I call that, which, every mans health and occaſions being conſidered, will agree therewith, and leave time ſufficient for the diſcharge of the duties of the day. And ſuppoſing the publick ſervice to begin generally about nine of the clock, between ſix and ſeven will be a good hour: and all things being well ordered may conſiſt very well with moſt mens health and occaſions. And of this time, which paſſeth between my riſing and going to Church, if an hour and the odd parts be divided between the devotions of the family and the cloſet, ſo that half an hour be ſpent in the one, and the other half with the odd time in my cloſet, it may do very well; and the common occaſions of moſt houſes being conſidered, ſo much time may be

Part III. Chap. 8 allowed: If ſo much cannot be afforded to this work, yet let ſome; and what day ſoever I ~~ſpend~~ dispence with double prayers (I mean prayer in my cloſet, and prayer in my family) yet this day let me omit neither. It is a bad *omen* to begin the ſanctification of the Lords day by the breach of my ordinary courſe of devotion, and an argument it is likely to be but negligently ſanctified by me. Beſides, many in my family may perhaps make no other preparation for the worſhip of God, than what they make by joyning in the family-devotions; it will be therefore the more neceſſary to make ſure of thus much.

Sect. 2.

Of ſecret devotion in the Cloſet before going to Church.

NOw my private devotions will be for the main the ſame this day as others. Only in my Meditations it is to be remembred that I examine

examine my self touching my prepara- Part III.
ra ions for the solemn worship of Cha. 8.
God that day: and if any thing in my preparatory devotion be wanting (any sin unconfessed, unrepented of, &c.) in these my morning devotions, let that be done. And how compleat soever I may conceive my preparations to have been, yet let me not in my prayers in private that morning forget to send up some petitions for preparing and assisting grace, to the end I may more spiritually go through the duties of the day: for the doing of which, I can- Chap. 2.
not now want directions, after a preparatory prayer already considered upon. And these my closet devotions it will be necessary be first performed; for that they will very well fit me to perform my devotions in my family with more fervency:

Sect. 2.

Part III. Cha 8.

Sect. 31.

Of Private devotion in the family before going to Church. A digression touching what our devotion in the family is alwaies to consist of.

THese therefore being done, and it being now somewhat above half an hour till the time we usually go to Church, I am to call all my family (except in extraordinary cases of sickness, &c) together to prayer, at which time all of them, who that day can go to Church, which should be, as many as may be, should appeare dressed as they are to go, that so, after the family devotions performed within a very short space we might all together resort to the publick place of Gods worship.

Now if question be made what the devotions of the family are to consist of, the answer is, they cannot well consist of more or less than

than these two parts, *Reading* and *Prayer*. Part. III. Chap. 8.

By *Reading* here I understand chiefly the reading of the Word of God: and that it is the duty of the head of the family, either himself to read, or cause by some other to be read, the holy Scriptures in the hearing of the family; none can question, who considers those frequent Commands to the ancient people of God, to *teach their children the Law of God, and his judgments*, and dealings with them. Deut. 4. 9. &c.

Now how they can be taught those things by their parents, from whom they never hear of them, cannot be understood: nor will any reasonable person think these commands fulfilled by the meer teaching their children the *Belief*, *Lords prayer*, and *ten Commandements* (though this must be most sure to be done) for we find of old they were to acquaint their children of Gods wonderful works in delivering them *out of the Land of Egypt*:

And

Part III. Chap 8.

And in like manner we Chriſtians to teach our children Gods Miracles of grace, in freeing us by his Son out of the bondage of ſin; which, how it can be better done, than as God hath thought fit to teach it to the world, to wit, by the Holy Scriptures, none will eaſily find out.

Now for the method to be obſerved in reading the Scriptures in our family, that which was above commended for uſe in the Cloſet may haply be moſt proper. And if *I* ſo order it, that *I* read the ſame portion of Scripture in my family, and in my cloſet, it may be much for my edification: the double reading it will ſet it deeper, both in my memory and in my underſtanding. But then, leaſt *I* read faſter and more in my family than in my cloſet, and for other reaſons, it will be neceſſary that either my Cloſet-devotions go before my Family devotions, or that at leaſt *I* ſo contrive my readings, that what *I* laſt read in my Cloſet,

ſet, I the next time read in my Family. Part. III. Chap. 8.

Inſtead of Meditation, which was one part of my Cloſet devotion, if in my family *I* uſe to examine my people, what they have learnt or obſerved out of what hath been read; and where none takes notice of what is mainly obſervable, there ſuggeſt it to them, it may not be amiſs, provided it be done ſoberly (without a long deal of prate and meddling with curious matters) and without vain-glory.

The Prayers which *I* uſe in my family, except upon ſome very eminent occaſions, may beſt be the Prayers of the Church. Theſe are eaſie and beſt underſtandable: and the uſe of them in our families, will fit the plaineſt people in our family to uſe them with more devotion and underſtanding in the publick. Notwithſtanding *I* confeſs my judgment in this caſe to be, that the *Injunction* of them doth not in ſtrictneſs reach to private families, but there is a liberty

Part. III. Cha. 8.

berty left; yet if we use that liberty only thus, so as freely and of our own accord to prefer the Prayers of the Church, *I* really judge, (generally) it will be the best. Some particular cases there may be, as when any great judgment lies upon a family, or the like, which may be admitted as exceptions to the general rule, and in which cases it may be expedient to use either other or more Prayers than those extant in our Church Liturgy.

The general course then of my family devotions will be this. First, he who prayes begins with the last clause of that Exhortation thus: [*I pray and beseech you, as many as, &c.*] Then follows the Confession: [*Almighty and most Merciful.*] The Absolution is to be left out, except he be a Minister who read. Then comes the Lords Prayer and Versicles. Which being done, all rising, give attention to one reading a Psalm and a Chapter, or so much of them as the chief of the family shall

ſhall appoint. This being ended, if the Maſter of the family, or any by him deputed, will at that time examine, or briefly (as beforeſaid) inſtruct any touching what hath been read, here ſuch examination will moſt ſeaſonably come in. After which, he who reads the Prayers ſaying [*Let us pray*] all kneel down, and he begins with the Verſicles, *O Lord ſhew thy mercy, &c.* and ſo proceeds with the Prayers in their order, as they ſtand, morning and evening.

Upon the Lords day in the morning, after the prayer for the Biſhops, Clergy and people, that is juſt before the Bleſſing, it may be convenient to add, for preparing grace unto all, the prayer in the beginning of the Communion ſervice [*Almighty God, to whom &c.*] (or if there be any fitter in the Liturgy found) and that at the end of the Communion ſervice [*Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings with, &c.*]

And in the evening upon the Lords

Part. II. Chap. 8.

Lords day, after the ſame prayer for the Biſhops, &c. to add that prayer for fruitfulneſs by the means of grace, which is in the end of the Communion ſervice [*Grant, we beſeech thee, Almighty God, that*, &c. Thus much then as to the order of devotion in the family, both ordinarily and upon the Lords day.

Sect. 4.

Of reſorting to the Church.

THeſe devotions both in my Family and Cloſet being thus performed, it will ſoon be time to appear before God in the Church. And *I* am to account no celebrating of the Lords day like to that in publick, with a full Congregation of Chriſtian people. Hither therefore *I* early, with as many of my family as poſsibly (at leaſt conveniently) *I* can, reſort, both my ſelf taking with me, if *I* can read, my Bible, and Common-prayer book, and ſeeing that the reſt of my family, who can read,

read, do the same. And (especially, if the way be long) I watch very narrowly over my self and those of mine with me, that our discourse be not vain and idle, much less purely worldly, so as to unfit our hearts: and as to my private self the same care am I to have of my thoughts. Seasonable it will be to think of the happiness which I enjoy in that I come into the Courts of God, and feed upon the fat things of his House, and to praise God in my heart that I have such freedome of access unto him: In which case many happy and proper Ejaculations may I furnish my self with out of Holy *David's* Psalmes. Part III. Chap. 8.

Sect. 2.

Of due behaviour in the Church.

BEing come to the place, which is holy to Gods worship, I enter it with all reverence, bare, if my sex so require, remembring that though God be present every where, yet is he

Part. III. Chap. 8.

he more ſpecially in the places where his people are worſhipping him: and any poſtures of reverence, that I uſe there, are acts of worſhip unto his unſeen but preſent Majeſty, and therefore cannot but be miſtaken very much, if judged by any ſuperſtitious. Having therefore orderly taken my place, I ſhould (not out of cuſtom but devotion) bow to God my knees, and beg his gracious preſence and bleſsing towards me, and the congregation of his people that ſhall there meet that day, which I may do in this or the like form.

O Lord, who though thou dwelleſt not in Temples made with hands, yet haſt promiſed to meet and bleſs thy people wherever thou haſt recorded thy Name; be pleaſed to be graciouſly preſent to thy ſervant here worſhipping

ping before thee, and to the Congregation of thy people, which ſhall here aſſemble themſelves this day for thy worſhip. Pardon every one, who hath not prepared himſelf according to the preparation of the Sanctuary. Quicken us all for thy Names ſake; teach us to do thy Will, and build us up in our moſt holy faith, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

I know there are ſome who object againſt this practice, but I could never yet ſee any reaſon in their pretenſions.

This therefore being done, if the Congregation be not yet fully met, it is not for me to employ my ſelf in vain diſcourſe with any of my neighbours: but either to meditate on

Part. III. Cha. 8

on ſomewhat which may be ſeaſonable, or, if I can, to read.

And it may not be improper, till I am well verſt in it, and know my duty therein well, to read the Church Liturgy, Rubrick (that is the directions which are mingled with the prayers, for their uſe) and all: taking one day ſome part of it, and another day another, till I have gone through it wholly. By this means, diſcreetly uſed, I ſhall be able more readily to join with the publick in the uſe thereof. But if the Congregation be fully met, and ſervice beginning or begun, I am to yield all poſſible attention, remembring God requires my whole man, all mine heart, ſoul and mind, yea, and my very body too: Wherefore ſo am *I* to place and order even that (*I* mean my very body) as the worſhip of God, and the Churches inſtructions for the worſhip of that God, require, *kneeling, ſtanding and anſwering* ſtill wherefoever I ought. Nor am I to cenſure any

thing

thing if *I* do not yet understand its use: for by so much as *I* do understand, *I* cannot but in a good measure see the Wisdom and pious intentions of the Church: By those answers, which *I* with the rest of the people are to make, *I* find my self much quickened, and my wandring heart many times call'd home; the use therefore of these, as *I* should not omit, so should the benefit, which *I* have found by them, be an argument to me, to conform my self to every other practice injoined; not doubting, but that all of them will in the end have as good an effect as this upon me. Part. III. Cha. 8.

During the celebration of Gods worship, if my mind at any time be runaway from my work, I am, as soon as ever *I* perceive it, secretly to check my self, to call it home, and in my heart say, *Lord pardon and help thy servant*, or some such thing, and, in a word, to imploy it as fully as *I* can about my business, remembring not onely how displeasing it is

to

Part. III Chap. 8.

to God, but how unprofitable to my ſelf to draw near unto him with my body onely, and honour him with my lips, when my ſoul is afar off.

Whatſoever *I* hear of the Word, read or preached, *I* muſt remember all along to apply unto my ſelf: not carping at, or cenſuring the Preacher, but taking all in the beſt ſenſe, (*Poſſibly, it may be long of my ſins he did no better, or ſo ill*) nor looking ſo much how it concerns others, as my own particular ſtate and manners. And if there be any thing which more nearly toucheth and concerneth me, that let me be ſure by ſome means or other to keep or ſet home upon my memory: perhaps there may be ſome place of Scripture cited to confirm, explain, or illuſtrate it; let me note that place, and the being able to find it, may, in caſe *I* am forgetful, bring the matter to my remembrance.

The exerciſes of divine worſhip being all ended, *I* am with the ſame reverence

reverence to depart the Church with which *I* entred it (not rudely, haſtily and diſorderly, as the common manner of the multitude is) courteouſly ſaluting any of my neighbours, which *I* have occaſion to ſalute, and that with inward love and good will: remembring that the ancient Chriſtians had ſuch an uſage at their Aſſemblies, as *the Kiſs of Charity*; it is but Chriſtian therefore for me to uſe a charitable and chearful Salutation of any of my Chriſtian neighbours.

Sect. 6.

Of due behaviour between the Morning and Evening Service.

My return with my family home ſhould be with the ſame gravity and care, with which was my paſſage to the Church: my talk rather of what *I* heard or learnt, than of any worldly matter, except neceſſary occaſions enforce the contrary. And being come home, one of my firſt

Part III Cha. 8.

businesses should be to step aside into my Closet, if possibly I can, and there, according as I have found my my self affected, to apply my self unto God. If I have been awakened to any duty, raised to any hopes of Gods favour, strengthened in any of my holy resolutions, informed of any thing touching which I was ignorant, or the like, there briefly to bless God for it: if I have been dull and improfitable, there to bewail it, both which may be done after this or some such sort.

I Bless thee, O Lord my God, for the comforts of thy House; for thy awakenings of me to my duty; for any softenings of my heart, and sense of thy love, or hopes of injoying thee hereafter. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, who am a vain, hard-hearted, sinful wretch of my self, but to thy

thy holy Name be the praiſe. Now encreaſe, I beſeech thee, this thy goodneſs to me; and confirm me in thy Grace evermore: Let me grow in the knowledge, fear and love of thee; and any impreſſions thereof, which I have this day received, ſuffer me not to looſe; but enable me to bring forth fruit unto perfection, to the glory of thy Name, through Jeſus Chriſt, my bleſſed Lord and Mediatour. *Amen.* Part II. Chap. 8.

If this prayer may not ſuit with my condition, it may be preſumed, that as I have knowledge enough to ſee it doth not, ſo I have abilities enough, in ſome tolerable way, to repreſent and bewail before God my barrenneſs, heedleſneſs, worldlineſs, carnality, and whatever other

Part. III. Cha 8.

great distempers I find in my soul: which accordingly I ought briefly to do. And this being done, let me recollect my self, and view over in my mind those severals, which I have that day learned or been affected with: for this will further imprint them upon my memory. Less than a quarter of an hour may suffice hereto: and though haply sometimes I may see occasion to allow more, yet so much sure I may afford at all times.

Having thus fastened upon my spirit my spiritual gains, I now depart to my company for the necessary refreshment of my body, which this day was not appointed to abridge me of. Let me therefore be chearful, and eating my meat in singleness of heart rejoyce before my God: but let not my joy by any means be wanton, idle, vain, or intemperate.

Of the rest of the time which passeth between the publick duties of the day, the imployment ought

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to be ſacred, at leaſt wholeſome, and ſuch which may not indiſpoſe me for the remaining part of the daies work: and hereof much care is to be had, Part. III. Cha. 8.

Firſt, As to my diſcourſe: touching which, if it be the Apoſtles Precept, at all times to be obſerved, that *our ſpeech be alway with grace, ſeaſoned with ſalt*, certainly more ſpecially ought it to be ſuch on this day. And though it cannot be accounted abſolutely ſinful to converſe about ſecular matters of concernment, if occaſion ſo require, yet, 1. To be wholly taken up with theſe cannot but argue a greater care of this world than ſenſe of Chriſtianity, if ſo be there be any truth in that ſpeech of him who is infallible: *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh* And, 2. To be needleſly meddling with ſuch affairs, or idly buſying our ſelves about other mens actions and concernes (which are the ordinary ſubject of mens diſcourſes after dinner on the Col. 4.6. Mat. 12. 34.

Part III. Chap. 8.

Lords day) is at the best but a mixture of worldliness and vanity: and it is made the character of naughty men, that *their tongues walk through the earth.*

Psal 73.

Secondly, As to my actions care too is to be taken: It is not questionless unlawful upon due occasion, that is, on account of mine own or others necessity, or considerable conveniency, to put mine hands to an ordinary action, as is evident from our Saviours both doctrine and practice: But (as abovesaid of discourse, so now of business) to be needlessly imployed in worldly matters and ordinary work, cannot but be some kind of profanation of the day, as being contrary to its sanctification, that is, the spending it to other uses and ends, than those for which it was set apart. And albeit in this case no certain perpetual rule is to be set (the conditions of men being various) but each mans Christian discretion and piety ought to mete out to himself

Luk. 13. 15.

what

what he in his own conſcience, and in the fear of God, conſidering his occaſions, judgeth fit (in which we are not one to judge another) notwithſtanding I cannot think that man takes ſuch care of himſelf as he ought, or is duly cautious of indiſpoſing his heart for his duty, who can conſtantly ſuffer all this time, between Morning and Evening ſervice, to paſs over with him without any thing of devotion, either in his privacy or family, or juſt as the ſame time paſſeth over every day. This I ſay, cannot be to ſanctifie the day, becauſe not to ſeparate it from common, and to uſe it to diſtinct ends. Part. III. Cha. 8.

Soon therefore after dinner ended amongſt all the family, it is meet that I call the younger ſort and ſet them to the learning their Catechiſme: and as to the Elder, if I ſuſpect any of them to be apt to trifle away their time, let them be kept in my preſence; and if all of them be able, let them read, by courſe,

Part. III. Cha. 8.

somewhat out of the Scripture, or some plain and honest book; if all be not, then such as can.

Sect. 7.

Of resorting to Evening service.

WHen it is now almost time to resort to Evening service, let all be called together, to the end that all may orderly repair with me to the publick Assembly. And it may not be amiss (but right edifying) if some one person read a Psalm suitable to the present undertaking of going to worship God (such as is the lxxxiv. or the cxix. one or two parts of it being taken at a time, as occasion or time shall serve) to which reading all ought reverently to attend. And this being done, let the same rules and directions, which were given touching going to Church in the Morning, be observed in the Evening, and all as before resort to the publick worship. Which if they do, I and my family are

are now a second time attentively and reverently placed before God in his House of Prayer; where my carriage ought to be the same, as is before directed to. And surely unless I and my house appear thus the second time before God, I cannot account my self duly to sanctifie the Lords day, I have done it onely by halfes. The Church was never in a settled condition, but it had the Evening as well as Morning sacrifice *Vespers* as well as *Mattins*. Part III. Cha. 8.

If therefore any thing should so fall out, that I or mine are hindred from the second part of the publick duties of the day, it ought to be my grief and sorrow, *Psal.* 42. 4.

Sect. 8.

Of the duties after return from Evening service.

MY departure from the Church and my retirement as soon as I come home for about a quarter of an hour, or as I see occasion, should

Part. III. Cha 8

be after the same sort, as in the former part of the day. Which being done, it will be expedient to come amongst my people and see that all things are wisely ordered; that so, sometime before night, the Devotions of the family may be performed. In the mean time, both *I* my self, and as many of the family as can be spared from necessary services, are free to our private devotions. Onely if there are any triflers, let them and the younger sort be dealt with as after dinner, that is, kept, where the people most commonly sit, reading and attending to the Word of God; at least for some certain space. Let them not spend their time as they do ordinarily: for the Lords day should look with another face than common dayes all the day long.

This care being taken of my self and family, *I* see not but my Christian liberty permits me any honest refreshment, such as may be walking forth in my garden, in the fields or open

open air. Onely let me observe these cautions 1. That my walk be some such as *Isaac*'s Evening walk was, that my Meditations be good. Unquestionably I shall not find the fields an unfit place for good thoughts: There are many in the world, whom the very breathing the free air, the beholding the glorious light of Heaven, the passing clouds, the verdant earth and smiling face of all things, transports into a rapture of devotion, affects very much with the admiration of the Creator of all things, makes too long for the time, when either they shall ascend above them all, or see them pass away, and dwell ever with their God, beholding his face without any such interpositions. And with much advantage may a man spend an hour thus, mixing often prayers or ejaculations with these his thoughts. 2. Another caution I should observe is, That I return so early, as that neither my Devotions in my Closet, nor in my family, may be omitted.

Part III. Cha. 8.

Gen. 24. 63.

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omitted. And truly most convenient will it be, that my own private devotions (which, being that I look on my self bound to on other dayes, I cannot this day omit) be performed before that supper, which I take: for then shall I be freshest; then will what I have learnt that day be better in my memory, than after the diversions which my supper and company may cause. Besides that, the performance of them will have fixed and prepared my spirit against any such diversions, and for the performance of devotion in the family.

Now as to what I am this evening to perform in my Closet, it is the same, for the most part, as at other times. My course of reading must be the same: onely if so be that I see fit the portion which I read larger. My Meditations, besides what is every dayes task, upon what I read, may take in a view of my carriage that day; an enquiry what I have learnt; a considering it so as

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to affect my self with it; and a setting down a resolution to endeavour in all my waies a practice of it. My prayers may take in some new Confessions; [of my unprofitableness, hardheartedness, unsetledness] petitions [for pardon, *memory to retain*, *and grace to perform* what I have learned] Thanksgivings [for any quickenings of heart, resolution of holiness, any instruction or improvement of my Christian knowledge, &c] all suitable to what in my Meditations I have found mine estate to be: for the inserting or putting in of which, I shall easily find in my usual prayers fit places.

My Closet devotions being thus performed, time it will now be for me and my family to take what Evening meale we use: which being done in some convenient time before we go to bed (which ought not for many reasons to be too late) if I am a pious Christian I cannot but look upon my self bound to shut up the day in my family with some

Part III Chap 8.

some such devotions as I begun it with. Touching which some directions have been already given, as to Reading and Prayer: and it is onely to be added that I am to make some enquiry severally into those, who are under my charge, touching their improvements that day; to help out and instruct the ignorant; to rebuke, and that sharply, the negligent and heedless; to encourage the careful as my Christian discretion shall see meet: the properest place for which, will be either before the prayers begin, or just after the reading of the Scriptures, so that the family may be dismissed and the day ended with prayers.

PART

PART IV.

Of my most solemn Retirement into my Closet for the Humiliation of my self.

Chap. I.

An Account of what is to be treated particularly in this part.

MY most solemn retirement into my Closet, and that for which the place is most principally designed, is upon such daies or times, which I set apart to humble my

Part. IV. Cha. 1. my ſelf for my ſin: before God by Faſting and Prayer and Mourning, and all acts of Contrition.

And truly if the ordinary Faſting daies of the Church were duly by all obſerved, all, that our preſent deſign would ſeem to call for, were, to deliver the manner of their private obſervation, that is, the particular duties to be on them performed. But foraſmuch as moſt men keep them ordinarily no otherwiſe, than by a little change of diet, taking perhaps fiſh, &c. for fleſh, and feeding neither more ſparingly, nor much leſs deliciouſly, than they do on other daies, and ſo make them indeed no faſting daies, we muſt conſider both of the *Setting* apart of daies for private faſting, and of their *Obſervation* when ſet apart. But firſt of all it will be neceſſary to ſpend a few thoughts upon the nature and ends of *Faſting*.

Chap.

Chap. II.

Of the Nature and Ends of Fasting.

BY Fasting here is meant the Religious abstaining from our lawfull food. Lawful food at present we will account that, which, according to the common practice of sober and discreet persons of our rank and quality, is neither too *much* nor too *dainty* for us. For we may account a man intemperate in his feeding, as well by being too delicate and fine, and eating constantly on things which are fit chiefly for persons above his degree, as by eating overmuch. Now not all abstaining from this my lawful food is that *Fasting*, which is here intended: for I may abstain for my healths sake, or through business, or (by some accidents) upon necessity, and

Part IV Chap. 2.

and all (it may very well be, without sin, and yet not fast as fasting signifies a duty, or an act acceptable to God: but it must be a Religious abstaining, which I can duely call Fasting, as at present that name is used: Now it will be best discerned to be Religious, by the ends which I design to my self therein, and by my imployment of my self upon such my Fasting daies.

See Dr. *Hammon*, Pract. Catech. Lib. 3. Sect. 4.

First, as to the ends and designs of him who abstaines or fasts religiously. The chiefe of them are

1. Devotion, or the performance of religious exercises: when I fast, that I may have more leisure and be fresher for *Reading, Meditation, and Prayer.*

2. Mortification: when I fast to tame my flesh, to keep under and beat down my body, that it may be in due obedience to the commands of God and reason.

3. Liberality: when I fast to deal my bread unto the hungry, and either deprive my self or feed more

slenderly

ſlenderly, that I may have the more wherewith to relieve others.

4. Sympathiſing with the ſufferings of others: when I faſt out of a fellow feeling of the afflictions of Gods people, commiſerating their condition, and, through an abundance of charity, deſiring as it were to partake with them in their ſufferings.

5. Exerciſing my ſelf to the obedience of Chriſts commands: when I faſt out of ſelf-denial, and when I both would and could eat, by faſting, as by one particular act of obedience to that generall command of denying my ſelf, *exerciſe my ſelf unto godlineſs.*

6. Diverting or removing Gods wrath, and expreſſing my ſorrow and humiliation for ſin: when Gods wrath either reſting upon my country or friends, or ſelf, or hanging over any of our heads, I faſt and deprecate it, and beg pardon of all thoſe evils, which have brought us into ſuch miſery and danger.

7. An

Part. IV. Chap. 2.

2 Cor. 7. 11.

7. An holy revenge or punishment of my self: when having repented of some sin, for which I am holily angry with my self, I choose thus to punish and chastise my self for my former (it may be) luxury, wantonness, or the like.

When I say out of any of these intentions or with these designs I abstain from my lawful meat, I then fast in the sense that fasting is now taken: for this is (thus far) Religiously to abstain, and no doubt, but such abstaining is acceptable unto God, if all be as right as my intentions, that is, if suitable performances or devotions be added, touching which, rules will anon be considered, when the nature of fasting is a little further looked into, and it is evident that it is a duty, and no such needless matter as men usually seem to take it for, if we may judge of what they think by what they do.

Chap.

Chap. III.

That Faſting is a Chriſtian Duty.

NOw that none either ſuſpicion touching its neceſſity, or excuſe for its neglect may be left, it will be expedient to conſider what Evidence may be brought that Faſting is a Chriſtian duty. And

1. Indeed there needeth little more to be urged for the proving it a duty, beſides the recollection and ſumming up thoſe excellent ends to which it ſerves and conduceth. No doubt but to humble my ſelf for my ſins, to pray earneſtly for pardon, and for the turning away of Gods wrath are duties; No doubt but to keep under my body and make it ſubject, to relieve the poor, to ſympathize with the *afflictions of Joſeph*, are duties: now to all theſe is faſting

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Part. IV. Cha. 3.

ing a meanes, and of some of them (besides) an expression. No doubt but to deny my self, and to take upon my self an holy revenge for my former extravagancies, are duties: Now of these is Fasting a part. It may therefore hence sufficiently be concluded a duty.

Mat. 6 2, 6, 15. compated.

2. A further evidence of the same I take it to be, that Fasting is by our Saviour, in that Sermon of his upon the Mount, which delivers to us the sum of the Christian law, or rule of Evangelical duties, ranked with Prayer and Almes giving; (which are undoubted duties) and rescued from the Pharisaical abuses of it, the true manner of it being insinuated: Insomuch that it may be justly demanded, how comes it to stand in the Christian law? to what end needed its practice to be vindicated from corruption, and asserted, as it is by Christ, to its purity, if it were not a Christian duty? Besides

3. We find God in its season calling

ling for it, of old by his prophet *Joel*, *Sanctifie a Faſt, call an Aſſembly*; which place though it intend a publick Faſt, yet it is evident our Saviour in St. *Matthew* ſpoke of thoſe private Faſts, which every one is by him ſuppoſed to conſecrate unto God. Who knows not that the *Afflicting of the ſoul* (touching which we meet with ſo many commands, and ſuch frequent mention in the old Teſtament) doth mainly intend faſting? And as to the new Teſtament, further yet: though our Saviour once tell us, the ſeaſon for his Diſciples faſting was not then come, *while the Bridegroom was with them*, yet at the ſame time he tells us, its ſeaſon would not be long too, *and then they ſhould faſt*.

Part IV. Cha. 3. Joel 2.15

Mat. 9.15

4. Again, the conſtant ſenſe of the world, and of all the Saints of God in all ages (amongſt whom by how much ſoever any have been more zealous, by ſo much the more hath he been in the exerciſe of faſting) is an argument (no whit contemptible

Part. IV. Chap. 3.

temptible of its being a duty. Not onely the Saints under the Law fasted, and the Pharisee too twice a week, but the devout Christians have ever been to us ensamples hereof. And,

5. (Which sets it off with more advantage) we find not onely the commendation of them for this practice, but the recompence of it with many signal blessings recorded in Scripture: which recompence God doth not use to give to will-worship. Thus we find *Anna* commended for her continuing in the Temple day and night, *serving God with Fastings and Prayers.* And it is observable, that *fasting* is there reckoned as one part of her *serving God.* That blessed vision, which led *Cornelius* to the knowledge of Christ was vouchsafed to him upon a day when he had fasted till about the ninth hour (which is with us three a clock) and then too we find him not at meat, but prayer.

Luke 2. 36.

Act. 10.

All which cannot but enforce that

though

though it be not alwaies and indispensibly a duty, as is Faith, Repentance, Charity, and such others; yet is it as far a duty as any thing can be that is not required absolutely and for it self: and that therefore whensoever there is occasion for it (and no Christian can be long without due occasions requiring it) it is to be performed; and being so, if it should be performed in manner of a free will offering, or oftner than in strictness the Christian might seem to have need of it, yet if it be done as it should be, it is likely to be acceptable to God. Part. IV. Cha 3.

But this makes it seasonable to enquire how often a Christian is to fast.

Chap. IV.

How often a Christian is to fast.

IN answer whereunto it must be said, that no certain or constant rule, as to all persons, can or may be given herein: nor will the times of fasting be the same to all, some men having more need, others less (if not need yet) opportunity. We are assured by the ends to which it serves, that many mens particular conditions (which haply leave them none other means to mortifie the flesh but this) make it a duty very necessary for them to be much in. On the other side. those who ever feed sparingly and temperately, and have an evener constitution, less inclined to carnality and inordinate affections, than have other men, seem to have least need of this taming discipline. And those whose labours

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are daily and hard, and whoſe life is ſervile, many times neither have ſo much need, nor ſo much opportunity of faſting, as have thoſe whoſe life is eaſier. Yet foraſmuch as it is (according to what hath been above inſinuated) a piece of *Afflicting a mans ſoul*, and ſo a neceſſary piece of contrition and repentance (which hath commonly ſomewhat of *indignation* againſt a mans ſelf in it) there is none who can think himſelf wholy diſpenſed with for it, or to have no need at all of it. But I ſay every mans conſcience and Chriſtian diſcretion muſt in the fear of God ſet to himſelf the rule, how often he is to faſt: for that every one beſt knows his own needs, and it would be very ſinful in ſome not to uſe more ſtrict and oftner faſtings than others; and ſome on the contrary muſt be very injurious to themſelves, ſhould they uſe ſo much faſting, as others (if they duely conſider their leiſure and condition) cannot but think themſelves in duty

Part. IV. Cha. 4.

bound to. This is the ſum of what in general may be poſitively determined as to all. Yet it is worthy our conſideration, and may be a guide to particular perſons to remember.

Firſt, that it is a practice of very great antiquity to *faſt twice a week*, and was in uſe as is evident before our Saviours daies, and by him not cenſured in the Phariſee upon any other account, than becauſe he was proud and conceited of it, uſing to reflect upon it in oſtentation of his own holineſs, and ſcorn of others. And it is a very worthy note of St. *Chryſoſtomes*, that we ſhould onely *avoid the Phariſees pride, but not neglect his performances*, as on the other ſide, *forſake the Publicans ſins, but retain his humility*. There is alſo a conſtitution, which although perhaps it pretend to more authority and antiquity than it ought, yet muſt be acknowledged to be ancient and not unreaſonable, that we ſhould faſt *Wednſdaies and Fridaies*,

daies, becauſe *on the one the Lord was betrayed, and on the other crucified:* and it is beyond controverſie that the primitive Chriſtians uſed to have their ſolemn aſſemblies upon thoſe daies, not much leſs conſtant than upon the Lords daies. Part. IV. Cha. 4. *Conſtitut. a Clem. Roman. collect. Lib 5. Cap. 14.*

Secondly, that if this courſe be not alwaies to be uſed (which yet I know not what ſhould hinder, except a man want leiſure) yet at certain ſeaſons, as in *Lent and Ember weeks*, the commands and cuſtom of the Church will engage me to as much as this amounts to, if not to more. And he to whom the commands of our preſent, and continued practice of the Catholick Church in devotionals ſignifie nothing, is ſurely a man of a ſtrange humourous ſanctity.

Laſtly, It is out of queſtion that there is no Chriſtian can walk ſtrictly and keep a good conſcience towards God and man, who hath not *his ſolemn ſet daies for the performing that great and weighty duty of humi-* Dr *Hammons* Pract. Catech Lib 2. Sect 3.

Part. IV. Chap. 4.

humiliation, in calling himself to an account for all his waies, and confessing his sins more particularly before God: and those daies should not be too slow in their returns [that is, too seldom] *least his soul should be too deep in arrears* [that is, least there should be such a long score of his sins unrepented of, that he think it an infinite and endless work to repent of them] *and so be loath to come to account at all. It is very reasonable therefore for every man and woman of any tolerable leisure to set apart one day in a week for this purpose, or if the whole day, or any other part of it may not be spared from the business of his calling, yet the dinner time that day may be borrowed from eating and thus more usefully ~~fully~~ imployed without disturbance to the affairs or injury to the health of any ordinary person.* I do not say that this day ought alwaies to be one and the same: it may be one week one day, and the next another, according as my occasions will best bear: nay even after

after I have appointed it, upon unexpected events, it may undoubtedly be altered without sin, but wholy neglected it cannot be without a sinful omission, except upon some urgent, or more than ordinary business. Part. IV. Cha. 5.

Chap. V.

Of the Preparatory acts for Private Fasting daies.

THe worship of God is ever best celebrated, when some kind of preparation is made for it: It will be meet therefore that somewhat I do by way of preparation for my private fasts.

And one piece of Preparation as well for these daies as for the Lords day it self (though indeed somewhat remote, or afarre off) it will be, to be diligent other daies in my calling, and well to husband both my

Part. IV. Cha. 4.

time and eſtate. For if he, who hath not by his ſix daies labour made ſuch proviſion for himſelf and his, as that he may be without care of providing upon the ſeventh day, will ſcarce reſt that ſeventh day unto God without diſtraction (as ſeems to be ſuggeſted to us by thoſe words [*Six daies ſhalt thou labour*] being put into the fourth Commandement, much leſs will he be able to allow himſelf conſtantly more time in a week than a ſeventh day comes to, to wit ſome part of every day, and a conſiderable part beſides of one of the ſix daies (which is to be his faſt) to the ſervice of God. I would therefore have every man not to incumber himſelf in this world more than he needs muſt. We ſhould learn to know when we have enough, and allow our ſelves ſome part of our time to enjoy as well as all to get. But this is preparation very far off.

The firſt act of more immediate preparation for theſe my faſting daies

daies will be, prudently to contrive, upon foresight and consideration of my weeks business, what day or daies they are, in which I can best spare time for this work: and those daies or that day will be the fittest to be pitched upon, in which I may the most freely converse with God without the disturbance, which much business necessarily brings. Besides the time spent in my ordinary course of devotions, which are not upon my fasts to be omitted, under pretence of making amends for them, or running them up into my penitentiary performances, I cannot upon those daies when I allow least, allow less than two hours and upwards to the peculiar work of my fasts. So much time therefore, at the least, I say, I must resolve such a day to devote.

Which being resolved upon, it will be fit (as a second act of my more immediate preparation) in the devotions of the evening before, to spend a petition or two in my pray-

Part. IV. Cha. 5

ers to God, that he would *by his gracious Spirit prepare me for the work which I intend the next day, softning my heart and giving me to understand my errours, that I may duely lament them and truly amend them*; which petitions I may easily see a fit place to insert in my prayers. And the day being come, unto my morning devotions it will be expedient to add some such short prayer, as this which follows.

O Lord who sees the purposes of all hearts, and hast been privy to the intentions of thy servant touching calling himself this day to an account of his waies, and humbling himself before thee for all his transgressions; Be thou in mercy present to me by the preventings and assistance of thy grace, that I may with a true heart and con-

contrite ſpirit perform what I intend. Grant that no worldly cares or buſineſs may ſo take off my mind from thee, but that I may be able forthwith to return, and without diſtraction to employ my whole ſoul in my deſigned devotions; to the glory of thy Name, my own amendment and comfort here, and everlaſting bleſſedneſs hereafter in and through thy Son Jeſus Chriſt my Lord, *Amen.*

And laſtly, my morning devotions being thus finiſhed, untill the time come that I have reſolved to retire I muſt endeavour to converſe and behave my ſelf in my ordinary affairs ſo warily as that no thing may diſcompoſe, diſorder, or diſturb me; no worldly deſign too much poſſeſs my thoughts, according as above I have prayed.

Chap.

Chap. VI.

The order of Humiliation or Penitentiary Devotions.

Sect. 1.

The entrance unto the work.

THat time being now come, which I appointed to spend with God in my Closet, I must religiously observe mine appointment: For albeit the resolve was onely private, and never proceeded without my own breast or closet, yet hath God taken notice of it, and it stands on record in his omniscience; and by breaking these my private and (as happily I may judge) less material resolutions, I shall soon learn to break my word and vows too in other matters, both with God and man.

Coming

Coming therefore at my time appointed into my Closet, I reverently kneel down before God, and having the sense of his presence, and all-seeing eye upon mine heart, humbly begin in some such short prayer, as is this which follows. Part. IV. Chap. 6.

I Am come, O Lord, into thy presence, upon work, which no one hath more need to do than my self, to consider my wayes, and repent of my sins, and turn to thee. But I have an hard heart, not apt to relent; and dry eyes, such, at least, which seldom shed tears for my sins. O that thou would'st bow the Heavens, and come down, and melt my soul, that it might kindly flow forth before thee in godly sorrow, which might work repentance not to be repented of.

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of. Open mine eyes and help me to see into mine heart: Bring my sins to my remembrance, and set them in order before me, that an holy shame and confusion may cover my face for them, and thou beholding my contrition maist accept it, and both pardon me, and assist me hereafter by thy grace, that I may live more godlily righteously and soberly in this present world, and attain unto blessedness with thy self in the world to come, through the merits of Christ Jesus my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

Sect.

Sect. 2.

Of Reading, ſo as to fit my ſelf for ſelf-examination.

SOme ſuch ſupplication being with all my heart made unto God, I may haply find it not to be always the beſt courſe forthwith to fall upon the examination of my ſelf: For, for this I ſhall be the fitter when awakened and made more attentive to my ſelf by ſome other exerciſe. It may be proper therefore to ſpend an hour in the reading ſome honeſt practical Book, which treateth ſeverally of thoſe duties which we owe both to God, others and our ſelves: to wit, upon that particular Book, which knowing to be very good, I have choſen and ſingled out to my ſelf to read and practice, ſuch as are the never enough commended Doctor *Hammond's Practical Catechiſme*, or (if that ſeem to any too difficult) that excellent

Part. IV. Cha. 6. excellent Book, *The whole Duty of Man.* And in my reading hereof I must endeavour to read,

First, with understanding: so that it is not so much the repeating to my self the words, as considering and digesting the substance of them, which I must account reading of them. I must therefore read and study the Book as Schollars do their Books: and if there be any material thing, which I do not understand, mark it, so that I may inform my self, by advising with some more able person than my self.

Secondly, I must read all with application to my self, remembring that all this concerns me, and endeavouring to see how it concerns me; whether I perform the duty I read of as I should, or how I neglect it, &c.

By this means, taking upon every of my fasting dayes a part, my Book will in convenient season be read over: which when it is it must not be thrown aside, but read through again.

again and again, with the same diligence, till I am perfect in it. Nor ought the third or fourth reading of a good, profitable and practical Treatise, to be tedious or unpleasant to me: for that Christian duties are not new, but have been, and alwayes will be the same; and multitude of books do but confound plain heads. All wise men know, that to make a mans self master of one good book is better than to have slightly read an hundred, which were not either throughly understood or digested. To keep therefore thus to one good Book, which may instruct me of the sum of my Christian duty, till I have fully made it mine own, is my most edifying course.

Sect. 3:

Of Self-examination, and the view of our life.

THis my Exercise of reading being over, it will be seasonable now to fall to the examination of my

Part IV. Chap. 6.

my ſelf touching my ſins. And here I ſhall find a very good help of the former work of reading, eſpecially after ſome conſiderable uſe of it, when I am once come to know my ſeveral duties: for certain it is, *No man can ſee what he hath done amiſs, what he hath left undone* (which two heads, of *Omiſſion* and *Commiſſion*, contain under them all actual ſins) till he ſeeth what he ſhould have done. Now this duty of Self-examination, a man may be ſuppoſed either to be a ſtranger in, and little to have practiſed, or elſe to have been much in it, and to be throughly verſt in his heart and life.

He who is a ſtranger to it, hath unqueſtionably more work to do than the other. That he may therefore do his buſineſs throughly, he muſt begin with thoſe very firſt years which he can remember, and trace ſin from his infancy, through his youth, to his riper and preſent years. He muſt ſee what Devil firſt entred him, I mean, what ſins firſt

first seized him, how they have grown up and continued with him: but this will be too long a work for an hour or two. Such a person therefore had need to set apart whole dayes for this purpose, till he hath a little recovered himself, and set his accounts straiter with God. Yet must he not, while he is enquiring after unknown or forgotten sins, neglect to repent of his fresher and known transgressions. If therefore so it is, that for the present he cannot recollect himself, and make a diligent search into the whole course of his life; yet must he confess and bewail what he knows of himself, and together acknowledge how much he is in arrears, which he hath forgotten, or at present doth not see, and for all humbly beg mercy. But this not so, as wholly to put off further enquiry: but having this Fast examined himself touching so many years or moneths (according as his life finds his thoughts work) upon his next Fast proceed farther, and so

on.

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on the next still farther, till he come home to his present age. Now in this sifting of my life, if I can, it will be very useful to me, and much further a distinct Repentance, to use my Pen, and through each year set down my sins: By this means I shall be able much better to consider them, and so, both know more of my self, and of the deceitful wayes, which sin hath to gain upon me.

And because as I owe to God Confession and repentance of my sins, so I owe also acknowledgment and thanks for his Mercies, therefore in this enquiry, it will be necessary to observe Gods remarkable Mercies and deliverances to me, recording these also year by year, as my sins.

Thus will the sight of his Mercies aggravate my sins, and encreate my repentance; and the sight of my sins, parallel with his mercies, commend his goodness and inhance my thankfulness; both which are singular benefits.

And

And becauſe even afflictions have their uſe, and are to be accounted for; if therefore I find any conſiderable adverſity or croſs, with which God hath exerciſed me, this alſo is to be regiſtred as the former. If it did me good, *I* owe to God thanks for it: if not, *I* owe repentance for being incorrigible.

Being thus come to my preſent time, it will become me not to run in arrears again, but every Faſt day ſtill to make my accounts even; and to that purpoſe to take care, as aforeſaid, that theſe my Faſts be not too ſeldome.

Suppoſing therefore, that *I* am a perſon who have ſo far practiſed ſelf-examination, as that *I* have formerly taken account of all my life, That, which *I* ſhall have chiefly to enquire into, upon each return of theſe my faſting dayes, will be,

Firſt, What new ſins or commiſſions *I* have been guilty of ſince my laſt day of accounting.

Secondly, What neglects, eſpecially,

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cially, if *I* have formerly made any vows or new engagements to God, how *I* have observed or slighted them.

Thirdly, In what posture or temper my heart hath continued, and at present is; whether soft, tender, penitent and in awe of God; or whether dull, careless, insensible, or otherwise out of order and prone to its old lusts.

Lastly, How the providences of God have carried towards me hitherto; what mercies received, what afflictions sent upon me, and what hath been my carriage answerably. And whatever I find more remarkable, let it be registred in mine Accomptal (so I call that paper book in which I use to keep account of my life and spiritual state) whereof, as is aboveſaid, I shall find singular advantage in my succeeding time.

Sect.

Sect. 4.

Of the endeavour of godly sorrow. How to work our selves to it.

SIn is not such a thing, the knowledge of which is desirable for it self, but onely in order to somewhat else, which it is apt to beget, to wit, *Godly sorrow and Repentance.* My sins therefore being thus known, I am to set my self about the sorrowing for them and repenting of them.

And to godly sorrow, the readiest course will be, more fully to fix my thoughts upon the sins, of which in my examination of my self I have found my self guilty, to look upon them, so as that *mine eye may affect my heart*, my attent consideration of them may move and grieve me, as it ought. To this purpose *I* am to consider particularly.

First, the foulness of my particular sins in themselves and in their

own

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own nature how vile they make me, how unable *I* should be to look men in the face, if they knew all these unworthy acts by me, which *I* do of my self, and God far better than my self: how vile therefore must they needs render me in his holy Eye.

Secondly, The several Aggravations which they admit; the chief of which, and those which are aptest to affect me, *I* may take to be those which follow.

1. Against how great light and how clear knowledge of Gods will *I* have sinned. *I* knew such and such actions to be sinful, when yet *I* ventured upon them.

2. Against how many checks of conscience *I* committed them. Did not my own heart at that very instant smite me, telling me of the wrath of God and eternal flames belonging to those who do such things.

3. Against how many engagements and obligations to the contrary have *I* sinned. 1. My own vows and

and covenant both in baptisme and since. 2. Gods mercies and forbearance, which should have invited and led me to repentance. 3. Gods judgments and heavy hand many times upon me, which should have taught me righteousness. 4. Had I no hinderances in the way, which I broke through? It may be Gods holy providence cast somewhat in, which did a while retard my commission of the sin, and, if I had not been desperately bent upon it, might have diverted me and dasht the temptation.

4. Was not I the tempter and Devil to my self in them? Did not I set my self on work, without Satans incitation of me thereto?

5. Whether or no have not many of them been publickly dishonourable to God, and scandalous to my Christian profession? Hath not mine example, if not mine enticements, drawn in others to the same sin, or driven others out of conceit with Religion? Wretched man that

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I am! that I should so hold [perhaps teach] the faith as to make infidels.

Lastly, Something of grievousness the circumstances of time and Place, &c. may add thereto, which ought not to be overlooked.

Through such heads as these should I trace my sins, especially those of them, which are most gross; and in my Meditations dwell so upon these considerations, as may, if possible, move my sorrow, at least breed an utter aversion of the sin, and a loathing of my self for it. And if it be so, that I cannot shed tears and really mourn over my sins; yet if I can find in my self, a through displeasure with myself for sin, and an hatred of it, together with an earnest desire to be freed from the habit and power of the sin, as well as from the guilt of it, this I may conclude to be a sorrow of mind; and ought therefore to cherish in my soul

Sect.

Sect. 5.

Of Repentance, which is the effect of godly sorrow, its true nature and way of practice.

THe Apostle saith, *Godly sorrow worketh repentance, which need not to be repented of.* Now that repentance may seem to consist of two things, Of a *full purpose* of heart to forsake sin, and of *hearty endeavours* against it.

First, I say, I may not ~~not~~ think I have repented of my sin, till I have taken up a full purpose and resolution of mind against it for the future. As long as there is in me any intention of returning to it again, I am an impenitent wretch. Now such purpose and resolution the foregoing consideration of my sin is apt to beget: and therefore by laying such thoughts truly home unto mine heart, by employing my mind much on them, I ought to endeavour to work my self up to such resolution,

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and never to sit down contented, or think my self penitent till *I* am so wrought upon. *I* shall not much need to be minded, that during such endeavours I ought to intermix with my meditations, frequent petitions to Almighty God, whose Grace onely it is, which is sufficient for me for the turning my heart from sin.

Now purposes and resolutions are rotten, except endeavours to fulfil them follow. This therefore is the second part of repentance, that, as *I* have resolved, so I endeavour against sin.

And this endeavour against sin seems to have two parts, the one of which may best be acted in my Closet, the other must be acted any where and every where.

The first part of the endeavour against sin is, to do what we can to mortifie the habit, that is, the inclination, readiness and customary proneness, which we have to the sin, which is to be forsaken. And that must be done.

1. By considering with my self what means (or remedies) I can find out against that sin. Certain it is, the more I can restrain or keep back my self from the actual commission or doing of any sin, the more will the power of that sin decay in me, the less inclined shall I be thereto. Wherefore if I cannot at the first root out the habit, or overcome that miserable inclinedness, which I find thereto, yet let me endeavour to find out such means, which may keep me from the acting the sin, and, I say, that customary proneness unto the sin will by the grace of God decay.

Now in general it will be a true and proper remedy against any sin to consider the occasions or inducements, which chiefly lead me thereunto, and to provide as well as I can against them.

Whether or no is it a sin which is deeply rooted in my nature and constitution? or whether or no is it such an one, which by my way of li-

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ving, converse and custome, I have settled in my self? If it be of the latter sort, the breaking my self of that custome, the altering, as far as is possible, such converse as hath brought me into it, is a very good remedy against it. But if it be a sin innate, and after a sort planted in my very make and complexion, it is more difficult to subdue: But the way will be, 1. To take such course with my self, as that for the future I may keep my self from the acting of it as much as may be: And 2. To make it a constant petition in my daily prayers to God, that he by that Spirit, by which he is able to subdue all things unto himself, would mortifie in me the affection and lust, which I have after that sin. And by persevering in such course, no doubt but at length, through the divine Grace, I shall overcome it. These means therefore having consulted of, attending to my particular sin, the next step which I am to take in the mortifying of it, is:

2. To

2. To resolve there before God, diligently to use those means, which I have particularly consulted of, and so forthwith to order and contrive all my affairs (as far as in me lies) that I may without any partiality use them all, according to the best of my skill, and in the most effectual manner that I know.

The second part of the endeavour against sin (which will not be so much the work of my Closet, as of my life) is diligence in the using of these means (which I have thus considered of, found out and resolved upon) wheresoever I am, and whensoever I have opportunity.

Now that I may so do, it will very much help, if I write down these resolutions before God in my privacy, which I am to do in mine Accompt; where also I am to record every dayes fasting, and the issue thereof, what I found new in mine estate, what I resolved on, what means I considered of against such and such sins. We find they not onely

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onely made a *Covenant*, but put it in *writing, and sealed it before the Lord*, in their solemn Fast, *Nehem.* 9. 38. This will be one way to secure me against being slighty in my Penitentials: and it may besides much both confirm and quicken me in my execution of these my resolves, to read them over written by my mine own hand before God.

And being thus registred, it will be good for me to be often (when I come into my Closet about my devotions and examine my self) looking on and reading them over, least forgetfulness should betray me into the breach of them.

Sect. 6.

An exemplification of the former Rules in two sins.

NOw to the end that this most necessary practice may be as plain as possible, it may haply conduce to set down some particular

examples, in which those general rules may appear practised. And forasmuch as it was before said, that all sins, of which we shal find our selves frequently guilty, are either such which are rooted in our particular complexion (and so may especially be called, our iniquities) or such which by some outward occasion (as converse or manner of living) we fall into, one instance shall be of such a sin, which is commonly too too much rooted in mens natures or particular *Crases*, to wit, *Uncleanness*, the other in such an one, which though haply a man may be naturally inclined to, yet commonly may be more truly referred to the head of contracted than of in-born evils, and that is, *Trifling away our time*, or idleness. Part IV. Cha. 6.

First then, suppose that upon examination of my self, one sin, whereof I find my self guilty, is uncleanness; and this I find diversly to have run through a great part of my life. Touching this, certain it is, that I re-

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pent not of it as *I* ſhould, if *I* ſet not my ſelf to root it out. Wherefore, according unto the rules laid down, *I* thus proceed.

Being come now ſo far in my devotions upon my faſt day as to Meditation, and having in my Meditations chiefly imployed my thoughts upon my ſelf, whereby *I* have found my ſelf guilty of this ſin, I ſet upon the repenting of it. To that purpoſe I endeavour to ſorrow for it. I therefore conſider, firſt, how grievous a ſin that is in it ſelf. And in this caſe it may be, that good practical book which I have choſen to my ſelf to read and ſtudy, may much help me, and diſcover to me the grievouſneſs of it in its own nature. This being done, I conſider how grievous my commiſſion of it is: what particular aggravations all my actions of this kind admit. Here *I* open this my book, and examine it by thoſe aggravating particulars mentioned: All which cordially employing my thoughts upon, I endeavour

endeavour to affect my soul therewith, and to work in my self a loathing of such courses: This sorrow will work repentance, to wit, First a resolution against what I loath, and then an endeavour against it, as well by consulting remedies and means against it, as by putting my self into a way of using such means. And the result of my Humiliation thus far I, as breifly as I can, register in mine Accomptal, in some such sort as this.

A. D.— Januar.——— *Fasted. I found my self guilty of Uncleanness. This I considered to be in it self a very grievous sin.*

1. *It defiles my very body; makes me loathsome.*

2. *It debaseth and dulls my soul.*

3. *It is that which nature it self is ashamed of.*

4. *God most perfectly hates it, and therefore when he expresseth the vilest sins, calls them Whoredom.*

5. *It is one of those sins which God*

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God seldom suffers to escape unpunished here.

6. I shall never be able to like my self or have any inward content in my self while I practice it.

7. Perseverance in it will undoubtedly destroy my body and health as well as soul.

[Each of these and more than these, as God shall be pleased to assist me in my Meditations I am supposed to have attently considered.]

My particular commissions in this case have the following aggravations. They have been done [so long]

1. Knowingly. 2. [as I find it with my self] 3. Against my vow of baptisme expresly. &c.

Whereupon, most humbly begging pardon of God, I resolved with all my might to endeavour against it. To that purpose I considered of these means against it.

1. Spare diet: frequent fasting: avoiding high meats.

2. Spare sleeping: not lying down

down till sleep compel me, rising early or at least as soon as sleep leaves me.

3. *Hard usage of my body: lying hard, using prostrations, or tiring postures in my prayers, &c.*

4. *Praying often, and much conversing with God in holy duties, which will make me ashamed of such carnal delights and sordid injoyments.*

5. *Avoiding light company, light discourse, gestures, looks, &c.*

6. *Considering death, and that in its pomp and terribleness: looking much on Skeletons, dead mens sculs, bones, or contemplating consumptive and gastly visages.*

7. *Not venturing my self on any opportunities or temptations to it.*

These I then resolved to practise, and will therefore frequently read over. *Amen.*

But it may be this is not my sin (however, it will teach me how to deal in humbling my self for that which is). Suppose then I find my self

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self guilty of trifling away my time. There is no repenting hereof without amendment: But what course may I take to be truly penitent for it?

The answer is: I must proceed as before. Meditating, Resolving, Consulting, and by all means confirming my self against it. And the result of what I am to register in my accomptal, may be thus.

[*Such a day Fasted*] *I found my self guilty of trifling away my time. I considered the grievousness hereof.*

1. *This is truly idleness, what name soever else I give it. For idleness is not the doing nothing, but the not doing what I should when I should. Now idleness is undoubtedly a grievous sin, as having not only its own guilt in it, but the guilt of many more sins, which it occasioneth.*

2. *This is the frustrating the end of my being, as far as in me lies, a living to no purpose: and that how unworthy it is of a reasonable creature!*

3. I

3. *I must needs be unprepared for Heaven, and my great accounts, while guilty hereof. Every hour stands on record in Gods omniscience: and I cannot it may be give account of three hours in a day.*

4. *How evidently do I ruine my self, not onely as to the future, but as to this present World hereby. What might I do, and be, were I careful of my time!*

Further for me to do this, how grievous is it?

1. *I know it to be sinful.* 2. *When I have remembred my duties to be undone, I have yet neglected them, against the present warnings of my conscience.* 3. *How many waies have I been engaged against this, so much, so worthy work to do, and so much of my time already spent &c.* [*Easie it is hereby to see how I may proceed according to my particular state.*]

These Meditations being finished, and, as briefly as I can, entred, it remains that I enter my resolution

of

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of endeavour againſt this ſin as before; and then ſtudy meet remedies thereto. Now this ſin not being alwaies natural to them in whom it is found, but adventitious, it concerns me to conſider, as before admoniſhed, how I came to be guilty hereof, and to ſuit my remedies to thoſe occaſions.

1. It may be I *am buſied about many things*, and ſo either neglect all, (or what chiefly concerns me) my proper duties. Perhaps I cannot endure that which ſhould be my buſineſs, but am fickle, deſultory, and rambling in mine employment, and though I am not much guilty of doing nothing, yet do I not do what I ſhould: and this is undoubtedly a piece of idleneſs, (as aboveſaid) for a man to neglect the buſineſs of the ſeaſon and of his calling, and to be moſt taken up in things which leaſt concern him. Now here the remedy will be, to conſider what it is that is my proper buſineſs: to put my work into a certain mold

and order: and then to ſet my ſelf a taſk daily, and engage my ſelf (as well as I can) to ſo much of it, before I divert to any Eccentrical occupation, I mean to the buſying my ſelf in things, which do not properly concern me. Part. IV. Chap. 6.

2. It may be I uſe to ſit and talk away my time with friends and company: much goes in idle viſits: I have a nature, which is too ſociable, and when I meet with company to my mind, I know not how to deny my ſelfe of their ſociety and diſcourſe: and if I do not meet with ſuch, I am apt to leave my buſineſs and go ſeek ſuch. Here the remedy will be (partly the ſame with the former) prudently to proportion my time to my buſineſs: So much of my buſineſs have I reſolved to do: that reſolution muſt not be broken: ſo much time will that work take me up: ſo much, my devotions: wherefore I have but ſo much leſt for ſociety: more therefore I muſt not take. If therefore I am

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I am fite into any acceptable company, it will become me often to consider, how goes the time? so much of my imposed task yet lies undone, &c.

3. It may be much of my time is spent in dulness, sitting still, &c. It may be my constitution is such that if I eat heartily, I am a great while unfit for my work, and so feeding freely lies upon me a kind of necessity of being idle. Here the remedy will be to resolve upon a sparer diet, to bridle mine appetite and eat less when I do eat; or if I cannot that, to eat seldomer, and to be at least but once a day unfit for my work: which time of unfitness, if I will well husband my time, I may best allow for society; it will be fit enough for that.

4. It may be vexations, anger, or giving way to passion many times indisposeth me for business. Here the remedy will be to watch against such disturbances, to endeavour meekness, patience, and the mortification

fication of unruly affections.

5. It may be ſollicitude about this world, thoughtfulneſs, cares take up many of mine hours: and then, mine head being full, I cannot call home my mind and fall to work: and when by my care I cannot find any expedient for what I ſought, this breeds diſcontent, envy of other mens eaſe, happineſs, freedom, &c. And ſeriouſly it is a great deal of time, which narrow fortunes thus ſteal away from ſome men. Here the remedy will be, ſtudy of content, frugality, wiſe husbanding mine eſtate, proportioning mine expences to my revenues. And ſo what ever I find to be the occaſion of my loſs or expence of time, let me ſtudy a ſuitable remedy thereto, and regiſter as well the occaſion as its correſponding remedy. Let me then proceed to reſolve upon the uſe of ſuch remedies, and to order my particular affairs in ſuch ſort that I may uſe them with the beſt advantage: and ſuch reſolutions let me alwaies

enter

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

enter upon my *Accomptal*, for the faſtning them both upon mine heart and memory.

Sect. 7.

A further conſideration of Repentance with reference to ſome particular ſins.

REpentance may ſeem to have been conſidered hitherto with a Relation to habitual ſins, that is, ſuch ſins which either by nature or cuſtom are rooted in the heart, and have begot in the ſoul a readineſs, and inclinedneſs unto them. But ſurely, if I throughly underſtand the Practice of it, as it hath been hitherto deſcribed, I cannot be at a loſs in what ſort it ought to be exerciſed, when I find my ſelf guilty of one particular fall or ſin, the habit, or cuſtomary readineſs to which, I have not yet contracted: for the ſubſtance of my work is ſtill the ſame, *viz.*

Having

Having in mine examination of my self found my self guilty, I am by attent consideration of that sin, whereof I am guilty, both in it self, and as it is mine, to endeavour to affect my heart therewith, so that I may truly sorrow for it: and though it may be I may truly conclude, that it hath not yet got fully a rooting within me, yet for as much as the first or second commission thereof hath in probability made me more inclined and easie therero, than I was, when my mind, having been never much bent this way, was thitherwards more inflexible, therefore ought I to study and consult how for the future to secure and confirm my soul against any relapses or second backslidings: and after such consultation to resolve and engage my self with all possible strength against it. Part IV. Chap. 6.

One thing more, in case of sins committed, or wrong done unto my neighbour, is yet requisite to the making my repentance sincere and through

Part IV. Cha. 6.

through; and that is, that I forthwith upon sight of the sin, if possible, make restitution: otherwise that I make it as soon as I am able; and in case I am not likely to be able to make it, that I endeavour by acknowledgement of mine offence to seek for reconciliation unto him, whom I have so wronged. The necessity hereof may be concluded from what hath been above said, that repentance cannot be true, except there be an amendment. Now most evident it is, that while I suffer the wrong done yet to remain or continue, I am still injurious; and so consequently there is no amendment, and therefore no repentance. And the words of our Saviour most expresly enforce it. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remember that thy brother hath ought against thee, Leave there thy gift and first go and be reconciled to thy brother, then come and offer thy gift.* God will accept of no sacrifice or duty whatsoever, at my hands in such

Mat. 5. 23, 24.

such a case, will I have reconciled my self, if possible. If any think this not to amount to restitution, let him read *Levit.* 6. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. and *Numb.* 5. 6, 7, 8, where he shall find, besides the sin offering to be brought to God in case of wrong done to others, it was enjoyned that the principal should be restored, with an addition of one fifth part thereto. Now if so it be, that I cannot find those to whom I have been injurious, that I may make restitution, let me give and devote so much to the poor as would do it: this is *to restore unto God*, when I cannot to my brother: let me never lay up any thing wrongfully gotten, or that wherewith recompence should be made for wrong done; it will eat as doth a canker. Besides I cannot, if by wrong I increase my store, ever have a quiet conscience, or reasonably expect the pardon of that my sin. Part IV. Chs. 6.

Now the consideration how this restitution or reconcilement may be made

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made, and the Resolution to make it, may be best done in my Closet: and such consultation and resolution deserves a place to be registred amongst my other penitential devotions, upon the same reasons as they do.

These rules in my repentance if I have observed, though I cannot look upon any action of mine as compleat, yet I may have hope I have not herein been slighty, but that God through Christ Jesus will accept it.

Sect. 8.

Of that faith which is requisite in order to pardon of sin.

BEsides Repentance, it is commonly said that God requireth Faith of us in order to pardon of our sins: and it is most certain, if we understand faith as we ought. But it is as certain, that people are ordinarily very much mistaken in the nature

nature of Faith; as it is not unusual for us to be in such things, the names whereof are taken in such different senses as the name of Faith is in Scripture.

Part. IV. Cha. 6. Dr. *Ham.* Pract. Catech. Lib. 1. Sect. 3.

Now faith we all of us know signifies Belief: and therein doth the nature of it lye. Him that we believe in is God: that which we believe is his Word. So then, Faith is a full belief or credence of the whole Word of God; and especially of the Gospel; a receiving it and every part of it in a way suitable to the matter of it; agreeing to whatever is therein affirmed, as being true; believing all the promises, that God will never fail on his part, unless we do on ours; setting our selves to fulfil all the commands, as believing all that is commanded to be our duty and of indispensible necessity to salvation; trembling at all the threatnings, as being perswaded God will be as good as his word, and punish all impenitent sinners. Faith, I say, is the hearty and sincere

Part IV. Cha. 6.

embracing and being perſwaded of the whole word and theſe its parts after this ſort: and we muſt not ſingle out the promiſes and believe them alone; for all commands and threats are no leſs the word of God than are the promiſes, and therefore muſt be as much believed, nor ſhall any one ever be juſtified who doth not thus believe.

If it be asked, whether it be not faith in the free promiſes of the Goſpel, or a truſting to God through Chriſt, that he will pardon my ſin, which doth chiefly juſtifie me, I ſay, No: and that the embracing the doctrine of the Goſpel, the receiving every command and threat ſo deeply into my heart, as that the belief of the one turns forthwith into obedience, and of the other into an holy fear, (which are the other parts of faith) cannot be conceived to be either in their own nature inferiour unto that truſt, or leſs either valued or required by God. I do not ſay that God accepts of

of any of them, or all of them, for their worth: (He accepts of them, and of the person, in whom they are, purely through Christ; through his merits doth he impute this faith to such person for righteousness, that is reckon and accept of this his cordial and impartial receiving his whole Gospel after this sort, as well as if he had performed perfect and unsinning obedience, as he was first bound:) but this I say (and that upon the evidence already hinted) that justification, or the pardoning of sin, is no more appropriated to that one act of faith, which we call trust, than to those other; and that I cannot (if comparison in this case be made) but account those other acts (that impartial submitting and devoting the soul to obedience answerably to every command, that true resting in the fear of God) as the more principal, worthy, and I am sure, less to be suspected acts of faith: At the least I cannot conceive, what we call a justifying faith to

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proceed any otherwise than as follows.

First, I do believe the promise of pardon of sin to be true, and God to be faithful, and that without all doubt God will not fail on his part, except I fail on mine. God will not fail to give the promised blessing, if I fail not to perform the condition, upon which he hath promised it.

Secondly, I therefore forthwith set my self about the condition, or duty required, as I expect the blessing or promised mercy from God; I sorrow for my sins, I endeavour amendment of life, I cleave unto God with full purpose of impartial obedience.

Thirdly, having done so, I do not believe that all this is worth any thing in it self, but that it is through the meer grace of God in Christ Jesus, that I must be accepted, pardoned, and saved. Wherefore I trust to God according to his promise (the condition of which I have endeavoured to fulfil) that he will through

through Christ pardon all my sins, and reckon this my faith to me for righteousness. to trust for the pardoning of my sins upon any other terms is unbelief and presumption: for it is a believing God will pardon my sins upon other terms, than he hath said he would ever pardon sin, and that is a believing God will be false. Part. IV. Cha. 6.

But now let the case be put, that some grievous sinner, much humbled under the sense of his notorious wickedness, doth, as before-said, believe the promise to be true as it is, set himself about the fulfilling its condition (sorrowing repenting, &c.) believe all that he doth to be in its self worth nothing, but yet Christs merits to be of infinite worth, through which notwithstanding he dare not trust for the pardon of his sins, as remembring them to be so great, and doubting lest he hath not yet performed the condition, which the promise of the pardon of sin through Christs me-

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

rits requires, and in this temper dies; Put, I say, this case, shall we think this man hath not a true and justifying faith? He hath surely; and it may be a truer faith, than hath many an one who yet hath more of the trust. But yet it is evident he hath not this trust: for he durst not, through sense of his own unworthiness animate himself thereto. Seeing therefore, that it is very possible a man may in such case be justified without that act of faith, I conclude that justification is not appropriate unto it, that is, that a trusting in God that he through Christ will pardon my sin, is not that act of faith which chiefly justifies me, and that they are very much mistaken, who take this (by it self) to be the true nature of justifying faith, that they believe God will pardon their sin for Christs sake. So then, I now see the course which I am to take, in my humiliation, to sue out the pardon of my sin. I am to believe, that God will not fail on his

his part, if I do fail on mine: I am therefore to repent of my sins, as before I have been taught, and persist in amendment of life, all the while trusting in the grace of God through Christ, according to the promise of the Gospel, that I doing thus, my sins shall not be laid to my charge, as being taken away by the cross of Christ, in whose merits I have, through this my faith and the mercy of God to me, a share. Part. IV Cha. 6.

Sect. 9.

Of Prayer upon such Fasting days.

THat which will much heighten my affection in this my repentance, and further complete all its parts yet remains, to wit, prayer; which, as it must on this occasion and day be more large and particular than ordinary, so I cannot now want matter for it, after such consideration of my condition, and of the way how I am to seek for par-

don.

Part. IV. Cha. 6.

don of sin as is supposed (if the former rules have been observed) to have foregone. particularly I am to frame my prayers, or at least to alter them, as neer as I can, to my condition,

1. Confessing my several sins, and that not without those aggravating circumstances, in which I formerly considered them.

2. Representing before God my sorrow, my resolution of heart against them.

3. Begging his grace, to assist me in the fulfilling my godly purposes, and pardon for all my sins, whether known and confessed, or as yet unknown to me.

To these heads my Christian discretion may add more according to my particular condition. To wit, if any judgment rest on me or mine, or is feared by reason of these my sins, I may implore deliverance from it: If any mercy is expected, or by me aimed at, which I fear my sins may most justly hinder or blast, I may

may importune God for the granting it; or otherwise apply my self as occasion serves. Part IV. Cha 6.

Now as to the form or outward manner of my prayer; if I am able to pray otherwise, I shall not haply on these occasions see it always fit or convenient to use set, or composed forms: for that there may be many particular affecting circumstances of my sins, which no form will express so plainly, as I have need to express them for the moving my sorrow. If therefore I find my heart ready and so composed, that I dare venture upon what we call a *conceived* prayer, which being of mine own invention, by the assistance of the Spirit, may more perfectly suit with my condition in all; than one framed by another to my hand, having either noted in a paper before me the substance or matter of my *Confessions, Petitions, and Thanksgiving*, (which paper for memories sake, I lay before me when I kneel down to prayer) or else-

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else so considered of, as that it will be ready, I may spend a few thoughts touching the particular expressions, by which I intend to represent this my mind to God. To this purpose these two practices may be helpfull.

1. To read any part of the word of God, which (being I dayly read some of it) I may know to be suitable to my present case. If I find mine heart hard let me read some affecting working place. (such I may be presumed to have noted as I have read in my course.) If I find it tender, let me read such place or places, as may nourish this tenderness, or raise me to an holy joy, and delight in God and these duties which I perform to him. And in like manner, in other cases.

2. To recall and consider such fit expressions of the particular materials, which I am to set forth before God, as I may be presumed to have observed and treasured up in my memory

mory or book, in my ordinary course of reading. Part IV. Cha. 6.

After such premeditation, with an holy fear, I am to endeavour to pour out my inward conceptions before God, as fitly and as fervently as I can. But I must not think that fervency lies in loud speaking, but in the inward affection of the soul: notwithstanding if my closet be so situate, that I may judge I cannot be heard without, I may many times find, that it will conduce, if not to the affecting me more, yet to the keeping my mind more close to my business, for me to speak in a voice exceeding a private whisper.

But let me be never so able a person and my heart never so fixt, to use a form so far, as where occasion shall serve to leave it a while, to wit where I would confess or ask more particularly, may keep my prayers from being loose, imperfect, broken and disorderly, and consequently make my devotions riper. Now such an one is this which followes.

O Thou

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O Thou Great, Holy, and Fearful God, unto whom all things are naked and open; and before whom, as being of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, nothing that is unrighteous ſhall ſtand. I even bluſh and dread to appear before thee: For in me there is nothing but iniquity that thou canſt behold. Iniquity indeed is too ſoft a word; I am nothing but filth. I have ſinned againſt Heaven and before thee; and am ſo far unworthy of being called thy ſon, that I am not fit to be called thy ſervant: but deſerve rather as a rebell, as a faithleſs and treacherous wretch againſt thy Majeſty, to be deſtroyed of the Deſtroyer

ſtroyer, to have all thy wrath and plagues to meet in me, and to be made unto the world an example of thy ſeverity and revenging juſtice, that by me men might learn no more to preſume and backſlide. Part. IV. Chap. 6.

But there is mercy with thee, O Lord, that thou mayeſt be feared and ſought unto: Nor haſt thou, as thou haſt proteſted, any pleaſure in the death of ſinners; but art ſo deſirous, that they might return and be healed, that thou haſt not ſpared thy very onely begotten Son, but haſt given him to ſeek, and, by death it ſelf, to ſave the loſt ſons of men; promiſing, that of all thoſe, who through him come home unto thee, thou wilt by no means caſt off any. I come,

O

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O Lord, at least I have here set my self in the way to come, and bewail my departures. And let not my Lord be angry, and I will confess.

I have, O God, a most corrupt nature and heart, full of impurities and abominable things, as a cage of unclean birds. She was innocent in comparison of me, out of whom came but seven devils: I may most truly stile my self *Legion*: such swarmes of lusts do possess me! The lusts of the flesh († Intemperance, Idleness, Uncleanness) the lusts of the eyes († Covetousness, Envy) the Pride of life († conceitedness of my self, Ambition and proud Wrath),

Wheresoever in this prayer the mark † is found, the Reader must not forget to consider particularly touching those expressions whether they fit his condition.

Wrath) are things familiar to me, rooted and grounded in my heart: And that truly, Lord, not ſo much by nature, as by continued cuſtome and wicked practice. I have my ſelf made my ſoul more depraved, than I ever received it from corrupt nature. That I am dull and heartleſs in the performance of all holy duties; that I am vigorous and active in the ſerving my luſts and pleaſures, and the fulfilling the deſires of my fleſh and mind; that I am vain, heedleſs, and commonly void of thy fear in all my wayes, I owe very much unto my own vitious converſation; unto my giving my ſelf up to walk in my own wayes; unto my chooſing vanity, and addicting

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ing my self thereto; unto my either total neglect or slighty discharge of thy worship. Impossible in a manner it is, that any one who lives as I have done, should have a better heart, than I have.

And at this rate, O Lord, have I ever lived. My childhood, the innocentest part of my life, was a state of necessary ignorance of thee: yet even herein how soon did the accursed fruits of inborn lusts begin to shew themselves! My youth, what was it, but a vain and brutish, a mad and sensual age! As to that small notice, which therein I had of thy will and nature, how little credit did I give unto it, and how ineffectual was it upon me, either to the quickening me

to

to my duty, or reſtraining me from any wickedneſs! But as to my riper years, O Lord, I know not what to ſay: I ſhould in truth ſit down aſtoniſhed before thee, but that I want a due ſenſe of my ſinfulneſſe. Mine iniquities are gone over my head: That they are greater than I can bear, is little; they are greater than I can comprehend or number. Nay if I ſhould let paſs my ſins of ignorance, of infirmity, of heedleſneſs and inadvertency, (by which notwithſtanding I ſeriouſly acknowledge my ſelf times without number, to have diſhonoured and provoked thee:) If I ſhould inſiſt only upon my knowing, preſumptious and wilful ſins, even theſe, O Lord, it were impoſſible

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ble for me to reckon up. For beſides that vaſt number of them, which I cannot call to mind (all which notwithſtanding are upon record before thee) what a black and tedious Catalogue of them have I here open [or, which I can ſpread] before thee! How many wilful neglects, yea even contempts, of my duty! How many reſolute perpetrations of horrid crimes; ſuch which I now am aſhamed even to think of, yet did not then bluſh to commit; ſins, the heinouſneſs whereof being conſidered, if I could do nothing elſe but mourn over them all my dayes, though I ſhould weep as my Saviour ſweat, in bloud, under unknown agonies, I could not but

but account my self impenitent. Nay, had I onely that one sin of [**] so often by me repeated to bewail, what sorrow could suffice for its due lamentation! Part IV. Chap. 6.

Here are to be mentioned thy chiefest and most frequent sin or sins.

But if I add hereunto my [**] my [**] &c. what reason have I, were my fasts, confessions, prayers and teares a thousand fold to what they are or can be, to sit down and lament my notorious impenitence!

And besides this weight of guilt, which the heinous nature of my sins themselves load me with, what a sad additional pressure do their dismal aggravations bring? What circumstance almost can there be that makes sin grievous

which

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which I may not find in most of mine? It is but an ordinary aggravation of my sins, that they have been committed against knowledge, that I have held thy truth in unrighteousnesse, and being convinced of my duty, have both neglected it, and done contrary unto it.

† The very instant dictates of conscience, protesting against the sins which I have been about to commit; the smitings of mine own heart, not onely after and before, but amidst the very commission of them, have not restrained my head-strong will.

† Nay, O Lord, hath not the voice of thy Spirit joyned with the voice of my Conscience, and the united perswasions of both striven with me, but

but all in vain? † Have I not known that if I would resist, through thy grace I should overcome? And might I not through the same grace, have resisted if I would? † Have not I at the very same time thought of thy wrath and eternal flames belonging to those who do such things? and yet this in vain too. And besides the vow of my Baptisme, which I have owned and acknowledged my self to stand bound by. Ah! Lord, have I not made many a particular vow against those very sins, which after, as a Dog to his vomit, I have returned to; And † those vows brought to thy Table, and sealed in the Bloud of thy Son? Have not I tasted thy mercies encouraging

ing

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ing mine obedience, and on the contrary, sometimes wrung out almost the dregs of thy wrath in punishment of my backslidings.

Further, hast not thou many a time hindred me in my prosecution of these sins, and, by some interposing providence, dulled the temptation, which I lay under towards them; † When yet I have proved so far a Divel to my self, as to retrieve the temptation, and over-bearing the voice of my conscience, the resistance of thy Spirit, breaking through all engagements to obedience, which either thou or my self have laid upon me, yea and the very hindrances and lets, which have been put in my way against those

ſins, I have returned to the attempts and practices of them! Ah Lord! what can ſuch a ſinner be fit for, but deſtruction? And yet after this ſort, how long have I lived, ſinning! And how have I hardened my heart againſt all thoſe means, which thou haſt uſed for my betterment! Beſides, How many of theſe my ſins have been committed openly and in the ſight of the Sun, to the diſhonour of thee, and to the ſcandal of others, who beholding my practices have blaſphemed, at leaſt been provoked to blaſpheme and ſpeak evil of Chriſtianity!

All this, O Lord, is but my old wickedneſs: I have later [and † therefore if poſſible, ſome of them more grievous] ſins

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sins to confess unto thee. It is but [such or such a time or day] that I [* *]

Here mention later falls.

Ah! how can I lift up my face, or look towards thee my so oft offended God! And yet, notwithstanding all this, I have not yet done, O Lord. For besides these sins of mine own, what a multitude of the sins of other men do I stand accessary unto and guilty of! How many, for ought I know have I undone by my example! What a multitude is there, for whose profaneness and unbelief (being occasioned by the scandal against Religion, which my looseness hath possest them with) I am to answer for! † Some there are, whom I have more directly

rectly and nearly corrupted. And how many more may they have corrupted, who haply had not been in that case corrupt themselves, had not I propagated such sins to them! Ah! wretched man that I am, who have not been so far innocent as to be wicked alone, and destroy no more than my self.

And now, O Lord, after I have confessed thus much, notwithstanding all which I have confessed, and much more which I am not able to express, nor so much as my self to know, what an hard unbroken and stupid heart have I! The truth is, the multitude and grievousness of my sins is such, as is enough to make me impenitent and desperate up-

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on the meer ſight of them. I may well doubt whether it be poſſible, that ſuch a back-ſliding wretch as my ſelf ſhould ever be renewed again unto repentance, or thereby reſtored. But foraſmuch as I underſtand, that to turn thus deſperate, and to neglect repentance and amendment of life, would be worſe than all the wickedneſs, which I have hitherto wrought, I am here proſtrate before thee to bewail my ſelf, and with ſorrow and grief of heart for my former wayes do I here caſt my ſelf upon thee. If thou wilt have mercy, thou canſt ſtill ſave me: If thou wilt not, Lord, I periſh. But doeſt thou uſe to ſuffer thoſe to periſh who thus, with ſuch repen-

tance as they can, ſubmit and humble themſelves at thy footſtool, crying unto thee for help? Far be it from thee, thou Father of Mercies! Notwithſtanding, inaſmuch as I, being much worſe than ordinary ſinners, do more juſtly deſerve to find no place for repentance, and have therefore more reaſon to fear how thou maiſt deal with me, deal with me as thou wilt, † through thy grace I will ſin no more; no more knowingly and preſumptuouſly as I have done. And to that end I have here in thy preſence this day conſidered my wayes: † I have endeavoured to find out thoſe wiles and methods, by which the Devil and mine own luſts have enſnared me in

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such grievous sins. † I have resolved upon impartial diligence as well in my endeavours against these particular evils as against all other, and in performing unto thee hearty and intire obedience. These Resolutions I here humbly present before thee, sacredly engaging my self to do my utmost to keep them, and beseeching thee by thy grace to engage my heart more firmly to them. And, Lord, let not any dulness or want of that affection, with which I ought to have confessed my sins, to have bewailed my guilt, and to have passed these resolutions, hinder, that this my serious humiliation of my self should not be accepted before thee. Such contrition, as thou

thou haſt enabled me to, I have endeavoured, ſorrowing that I am not more deeply humbled: Such, which is wanting, do thou beſtow; For it is no leſs thy property to beſtow than to accept the contrite heart: The broken ſpirit is, O Lord, from thee. When thou of old commandedſt water out of the flinty Rock, it forthwith yielded obedient ſtreams: nor can my heart (dry and hard as it is) but diſſolve into holy tears, if thou wilt bid it melt: Give forth then the word, O God; Speak, thy ſervant is here ready to hear. Turn thou me and I ſhall be turned. Send out thy good Spirit: let it inlighten the eyes of my mind, in the knowledge both of my ſelf

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and thee: let it ſavingly perſwade me of the truth of all that thou haſt ſpoken, and eſpecially, of the defiling, curſed, and damning nature of ſin, of the ſufficiency and efficacy of the merits of Chriſt Jeſus unto all thoſe, who by a right faith apply themſelves to thee through him. (I do O Lord, believe, help my unbelief.) And grant that this ſight and perſwaſion both of my ſin and Saviour may affect mine heart, ſo that I may ſorrow after a godly ſort: and that ſorrow may bring forth in me thoſe wholeſome fruits (which after all my endeavours of repentance I cannot but lament to be much wanting in me, to wit) *careſulneſs againſt ſin, vehement deſire and zeal*

zeal of holineſs, indignation and an holy revenge againſt my ſelf; by all which I may for the future clear my ſelf, and ever approve mine heart honeſt, upright and ſincere before thee. Suffer not this my righteouſneſs to be onely, as a morning cloud or early dew, ſoon paſſing away, but let thy grace alwayes dwelling in me keep open in my ſoul an ever flowing fountain of ſuch penitence, that I may go on thus mourning to mourn over my ſins, and perfecting holineſs in thy fear; accounting all little enough, if ſo be I may but in the end obtain mercy. And this my penitent return (at leaſt hearty endeavour of ſuch return) accompanied with perſevering ſtudy of im-

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partial obedience to thee, do thou, however moſt unworthy in it ſelf, through the perfect merits of thy Son accept, waſhing away all my ſins (both the iniquities of my youth and tranſgreſſions of my riper years, as well known as unknown) eſpecially my [**] in his bloud; and reckoning, according to thy gracious Covenant, this my faith (which by ſuch works as theſe ſhall diſcover it ſelf to be alive and true) unto me for righteouſneſs. And, if thine infinite Wiſdome ſhall ſee it to be good for me, do thou grant me this further happineſs, that I, thus living in thy fear, may be ever filled with peace and joy, through a comfortable

Here mention thy chiefeſt ſin or ſins.

comfortable assurance of thy favour, and hopes of eternal glory. Part IV. Cha. 6.

As to all my outward affaires, by thy good providence be thou pleased so to overrule all events, that whatsoever befals me may work together to me for good. My sins indeed, O Lord, deserve quite contrary; even the severest inflictions of thy wrath and fiery displeasure. And I do most seriously acknowledge, that in all the judgments, which thou hast at any time laid upon me, thou hast used much mercy. All the paines, which my body hath felt; all the losses, which have impaired my estate; all the slanders, which have blasted my name [par-

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ticularly **] I embrace as infinitely leſs than my deſerts.

That † I am in any ſtraits, [**] that I ſuffer otherwiſe [in my body, relations, &c. **] were all a thouſand fold to what it is, I ſhould confeſs it to be moſt juſt. Were I to enjoy no more good than I do deſerve, I ſhould have juſt nothing. Righteous therefore art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee. Yet if thou wilt be intreated by thy repenting ſervant, to † withdraw [* or withhold] thy hand, to remove the puniſhment I feel [or not to inflict the puniſhments which I fear] but

Here mention any particular afflictions.

* *Theſe and ſuch like expreſſions are to be uſed according to perſons particular condiſions.*

but through the bloud of Christ to deliver me from thy present wrath, as well as from the wrath to come, thy servant shall ever bless and praise thee, and be able to serve thee with more chearful diligence. However, Lord, thy Will be done: Bring me surely to thy self, let it be by what means thou wilt: Please thy self, thy servant will endeavour to be content: Deny me what things thou wilt, onely deny me not *Grace, Pardon, and thy self.* Part IV. Cha. 6.

And not onely upon me, O Lord, but upon all men do thou have mercy, according to the gracious pleasure of thine own most holy Will. Especially upon the universal Church; Enlarge thou its bounds;

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

bounds; provide for its ſafety and purity, delivering any part of it, which is in danger, and reforming whatſoever of it is corrupted. Do thou with all ſuitable mercies bleſs this particular Church: Forgive the publick ſinnes. [* *] Heal the publick Calamities [* *]. Preſerve and every way be gracious unto the Kings Majeſty, his Queen, and all the Royal Family. Let all thy Prieſts be cloathed with Righteouſneſs, and let thy work proſper in their hands; and eſpecially within this Pariſh, of which I am a part, let the knowledge and fear of thee increaſe. Viſit all my Kinred, Relations, and Acquaintances [* *] with ſuch

Here mention ſuch ſins or calamities.

ſuch bleſſings as they need. Reward a thouſand fold all who have ſhewn any kindneſs to thy ſervant; [eſpecially * *]. Forgive and have mercy upon all mine enemies, and let not one of them ever fare the worſe for any wrong done to me. Deliver in thine own good time thy righteous ones out of all their afflictions, and in the mean time ſupport them, ſanctifying all unto them. [* *] Shew thy ſelf every way all-ſufficient unto all thine.

In all theſe vacancies thus marked [* *] *make ſuch particular mention as thy condition ſhall require, or prudence ſuggeſt.*

Finally, O Lord, I bleſs and praiſe thy glorious grace, for all thoſe bleſſings which I enjoy, and thoſe particular deliverances, whether ancient or later.

Part. IV. Chap. 6.

later, which thou haſt vouchſafed me. [**] Above all, for thy redeeming, not onely me but the whole humane nature, by the precious bloud of thy well-beloved Son; for that knowledge which I have of thee in him my Saviour Chriſt Jeſus; for any ſight and ſenſe of my ſin, which through thy grace I have; for any hopes of finding mercy in that great day.

Here bleſs God for any inward joy, enlargements, &c.

[**] I, O Lord, am far leſs than the leaſt of theſe mercies. It is thy goodneſs, thy goodneſs alone, which is the fountain whence they came: and mayeſt thou from me, and from Heaven and Earth, ever receive the glory of that thy goodneſs.

May

May I ever ſerve thee in new- Part. IV
neſs of life and anſwerable Chap. 6.
walking.

And do thou forgive not onely my former ingratitude, but my preſent want of thankfulneſs, together with all the ſins of theſe my holy things, waſhing me, and my very teares, prayers, and penitence in the bloud of my Saviour Chriſt Jeſus, in whoſe words thy ſervant will ſpeak yet once more,

Our Father, &c.

It is not to be ſuppoſed that this Prayer without any alteration will ſuit with the condition of every Reader: God forbid all ſhould have ſinned at that rate, to come up to which this prayer was framed. The prudent Chriſtian therefore

Part. IV. Chap. 6. therefore is to add, leave out, alter, what he ſees good; or, if able himſelf to do better, to lay aſide all. Nothing is here obtruded on any, onely directions and help intended to ſome who need them.

Sect. 10.

Of offerings to God for the uſe of the poor; departure out of the Cloſet, and behaviour afterwards.

MY prayers being thus finiſhed, I ſhould not haſtily run out, but pauſe a while, and remember that there is one work remaining, which is not to be neglected, if I have wherewithall to do it, being it is required by God in an acceptable Faſt: and that is, to add ſomething every faſt, though it be the leſs, to what I have formerly laid aſide for the poor; or if there be no ſuch ſtock already made by me, much more than to deſign and devote

vote ſomewhat to that purpoſe. *This is the faſt I have choſen, to deal thy bread unto the hungry, &c.* It being thus given, I may deal it when I ſhall ſee occaſion. Now as to the particular manner of this practice, directions have been above given, which eſpecially upon theſe dayes it will be expedient to obſerve. Part. IV. Chap. 6. Iſa. 58. 7.

And this being done, let me with chearfulneſs depart my Cloſet; let not my behaviour be without innocent alacrity: and let it be my ſpecial care ſo to order all my carriage on theſe my faſts, that they may not, if poſſible, be taken notice of by any but my ſelf and God; as being mindful of that command of my Saviours, *Anoint thine head, and waſh thy face, that thou appear not unto men to faſt*, that is, behave thy ſelf with ſuch outward chearfulneſs (of which anointing the head and waſhing the face are Arguments) that no man ordinarily, beholding thee, would take the day he ſees thee ſo, to

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Par. IV. Chap. 7.

be one of thy fast or mourning dayes.

Chap. VII.

Of great and more extraordinary Fasts, and the work of them.

BEsides these my Fasts which come in course, at least once a week, several occasions may befal me, which may require an extraordinary fast. Such is any great evil hanging over mine head, or my friends, or the Nations; any considerable change of my way of living, or the like: but especially, when *I* am to receive the Holy Communion.

My work upon such occasions will be the same as is formerly directed to: only my Christian discretion

tion will order it with a particular respect to that my great occasion which calls me to fast: which occasion *I* am especially to meditate upon (and that not without a regard had to my sins; if there be any evil which *I* deprecate, to consider how my sins have been the causes of it, if any good which *I* beseech for, how again my sins may blast that) and accordingly to commend it to God in my prayers: in which case also the form of prayer delivered in the foregoing Chapter will not be useless. Part. IV. Cha. 7.

Particularly as to that which will most frequently come in practice my humiliations preparatory for the Lords Supper. In these, besides that examination of myself, which in ordinary course *I* make, *I* am to look over mine Accomptal, to see every week, since my last communicating, what my carriage hath been, how *I* have amended, especially in those particulars, in which *I* had formerly taken notice of my miscar-

Part. IV. Chap. 7.

miscarriages, and vowed reformation. All my revolts and backslidings are to be attentively viewed, in themselves and in their aggravations, and repentance, as before taught, to be with all diligence and fervour, that I can, exercised.

Yea, and besides these times of special exigence, ought I to be often surveying and looking over mine Accomptal. In mine ordinary daily devotions, or in my devotions upon my fast-dayes, I shall find both need and opportunity for it. And if Scholars find it necessary to peruse their own Collections or Common-place books, if Shopkeepers review often their books, to the end they may, by seeing what they have formerly done, know how to order their future proceedings in their business, so as not to go backward, or be diligent to no purpose, how much more care ought I to take in the concernments of my soul, and for that Jewel which if I loose, although I should gain the whole world, I am irreparably undone.

Chap.

Chap. VIII.

The Conclusion.

THe Author of this ſmall piece, Chriſtian Reader, is very ſure, that be thou who thou wilt, thou canſt not but approve for the main that practice which is here commended to thee: although there ſhould be ſome particulars (as to the obſervation of Holy-dayes or the like) which may not ſuit with the humour of every mans devotion. Confident he is, he ſaith, that the daily practice of *Reading*, *Meditation*, *Self-Examination*, *Prayer*, the orderly and due practice of *Humiliation*, *Mor-*

Part. IV. Cha. 8.

Mortification, and the reſt of thoſe Subſtantials, which are here directed to, cannot be gainſaid. It might have been better taught, but he hath done it as well and as plainly as he could. Being therefore that thou canſt not but ſay, he is a good man who thus lives, and wiſh that thou ever hadſt lived ſo, he chargeth it again upon thy conſcience thus to live; elſe art thou ſelf-condemned, and guilty of known negligence and omiſſion. Thou doeſt not endeavour what notwithſtanding thy conſcience cannot but approve. He is confident further, that if thou didſt but feel that peace, quiet, joy and happineſs, which ſuch practice leaves behind it, if thou haſt

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any ſenſe what it is to have a clear Conſcience, and therefore free and chearful acceſs to God, and an humble fearleſsneſs of the face of men, which without ſome ſuch practice as this thou canſt never have, thou needeſt no other argument to quicken thee to this practice. Find a greater happineſs on earth, than for a man to be at peace with and like himſelf, and get that peace by any other courſe, than ſuch exerciſe of godlineſs, ſuch circumſpection over all thy wayes, as hath been here taught, and thou ſhalt have leave to neglect all: but if thou canſt not, then think thy ſelf bound to theſe practices. For directions in the making uſe of the Book, thou

Part. IV. Cha. 8. thou hast them in the *Admonition to the Reader*, in the beginning of the Book, whither return and read the whole over again: It will be no whit worse the second time read: And so God bless it and thee.

FINIS.